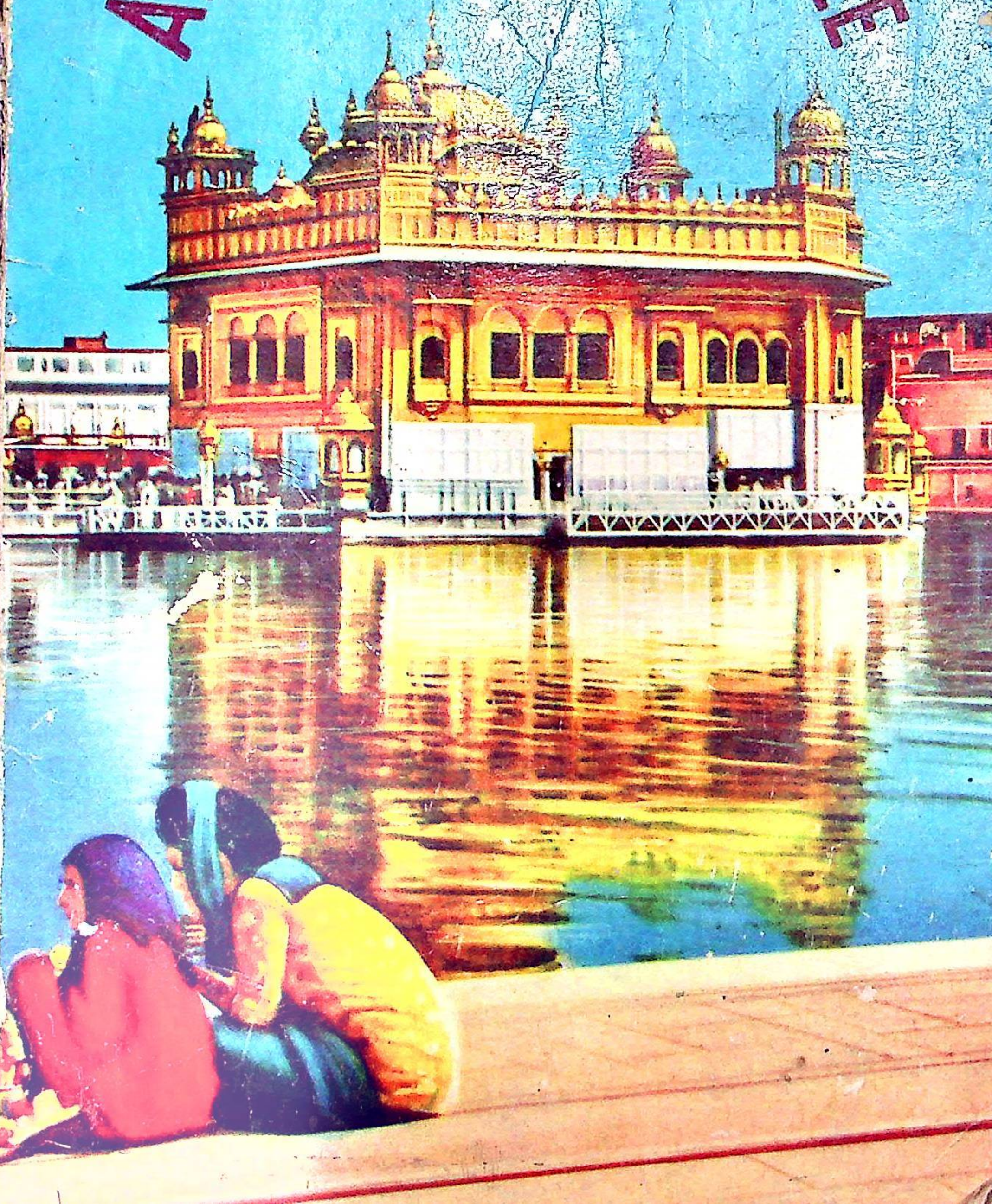
AROUND THE GOLDEN TEMPLE
AMRITSAR



Around
The Golden Temple

NARINDERJIT SINGH
M. A., L.L. B.

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Dedicated To

GURU RAM DASS JI

founder of the holy city who blessed me

with a new life.

ON QUATER CENTENARY YEAR 1977.

Preface

Dear Readers,

I thank you so much for your kindness, indulgence and love. The second edition has been sold like hot cakes. The third revised edition is in your hands. I am sure you will like it. I have made efforts to enlarge it. I have revised all chapters and have made efforts to remove short comings. For vetting the old edition Dr. Webster and prof. Darbara Singh have helped me a lot. I am so thankful to them for the time they devoted for me. I am also thankful to my dear friend H. S. Bajwa, who had been k nd enough to take colour slides. So that this time you are able to have all plates in colour. I have made special study for adding two chapters, i. e. Filigree Work and Filigree Workers of Golden Temple and Kar Sewa. I am sure you will encourage me.

My book is a small tribute. I dedicate this book to Guru Ram Dass, the founder of the city of Amrit Sarover. I do not want to stand between you and the book, so I thank you again. I fail in my duty if I donot thank Messers B. Jawahar Singh Kirpal Singh & Co. for their co-operation, love and kindness.

With regards, I am yours.

Amritsar : 12th July 1982.

Narinderjit Singh

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PATIALA

I am really thankful to you for presenting me your very interesting book "AROUND THE GOLDEN TEMPLE". Believe me I got through it is on the same day. I congratulate you for writing such useful brouchure. It is readable and has been written in easy and understandable style. The greatest merit of the book is that it covers almost all essential aspects of Sikh life and yet it does not claim much time from the readers The book is particularly useful for the foreigners and our youth who ought to understand Sikhism better.

Yours sincerely
Sd/-
(KIRPAL SINGH)

Contents

Filigree Work and Filigree Workers of Golden Temple

Man is a lover of fine arts, A person who is not moved by fine arts, cannot be called human. Generally it is a tragedy that most of us do remember the fine art. We appreciate and admire its beauty but we forget the persons who were instrumental for these creations. In fact artists burn the very life in them to create an object of art. As we entre the Gelden Temple we are enchanted by beautiful flower work in filigree, but we donot remember those souls who consumed their lives to create this beautiful work in temple which is in fact a wonder of the world and truly it has been said about Golden Temple, "seen all the places but nothing like you".

In Golden Temple we find four types of works of fine art. Outside on the walls, is Pitradura work or inlay work. Inside the temple on the top roof there is plaster work and mirrors work. It is also known as Jodhpuri work. On the first floor walls, is filigree work. In Panjabi it is also known as Mohra-Kashi work. It is technical job and its technique itself is quite enchanting. The artists takes a small piece of wall drenches it thoroghly with water. Then he applies past of lime over it. He smoothens this with plaster. Now he traces design. When the design is ready, he fills it up with natural colours. When the design has been coloured, he beats the piece with a small piece of iron so long as the colours are thoroghly missed and are absorbed by lime. This beating also gives a certain polish which cannot be explained.

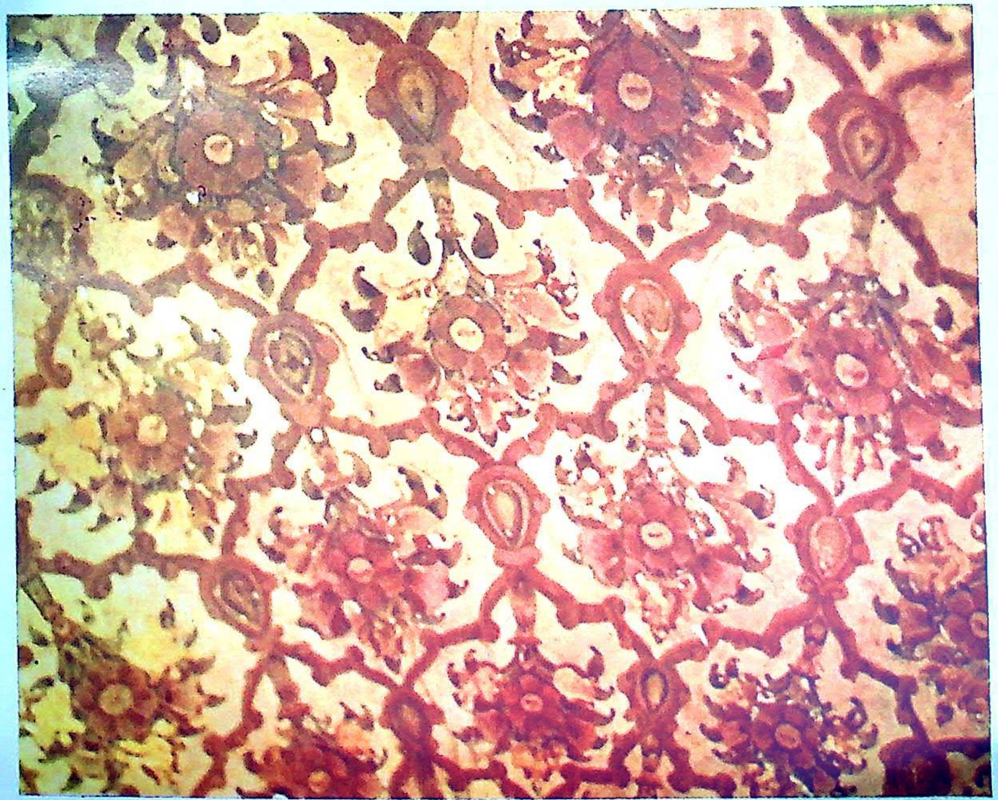
Golden Temple first filigree artists were unknown muslims who had been sent from Chanyot by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. They worked under the guidence of Giani Sant Singh. These artists from Chanyot have done plaster work and glass work in particular.

In 1810 or 1815 an artist came to the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and offered to do beautfication work inside the Lahore fort. His name was Sher Singh. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was happy with his filigree work and sent him to Amritsar for beautifying Golden Temple. As Maharaja Ranjit Singh had a son named Sher Singh. He asked the artist to change his name and he was hence known as Kehr Singh, Kehr Singh worked upon Darshni Deohri and the walls around. His art pieces give satisfaction to the eyes even today.

Kehr Singh had two nephews known a Kishan Singh and Bishan Singh. Both the brothers were adept in art. They worked hard. They also took lessons in painttng from Kangra Artists but Bishan Singh outshined in filigree work, It is said that Bishan Singh learnt the art of filigree work from master craft-man Jai Singh. His work is seen on the inner stair-cases of the Golden Temple. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a great admire of art and he rewarded the two brothers well.

In india it is a custom that art has always flourished only as family heritage. Bishan Singh trained his two sons in this art. They were Bhai Nihal Singh and Bhai Jawahar Singh. Both the brothers did justice to their father's ability and worked with Zeal. They beautified walls from inside. Now these brothers were deeply influenced by ideas of 'Vadant'. In their filigree work these 'Vidantic' ideas are fully visible. They show a man sorrounded by elephants. Elephants reprsents lust in man. So by showing the elephants





Filigree Work in Golden Temple

around they indicate that the man is slave to sex desire. Both the brothers spent their life time in service of the temple. Luck would have it, they did not have any offspring. But God gave them a talented disciple in Bhai Gian Singh who out painted his teachers. Recognising services of Bhai Gyan Singh S. G. P. C. presented him with a Saropa in 1949.

The family of Kehr Singh was not the only family in field of filigree work and wall paintings.Family of Bhai Jawala Singh has given valuable contribution in this field along with family of Kehr Singh. Bhai Jawala Singh came to join service of Maharaja Ranjit Singh during his last days. He served for beautification of Golden Temple for a short time. After him his son Mehtab Singh took over this work. He beautified Gurdwara Tarn-Taran and Goindwal. Later on the first storey of Baba Atal Rai's temple, he beautifully presented Guru Nanak's life story in shape of wall paintings.After him his disciple Bhai Harnam Singh was appointed in place of Sardar Gyan Singh. From S. Mehtab Singh his son Atma Singh learnt filigree work At many places time had destroyed old pieces of filigree work. Atma Singh did the most difficult task of restoring those old pieces. These days his disciple is looking after the work. The only tragedy is that to day the artists donot have patience that used to be in the past. More-over no new talent is coming forward to learn this decaying art. These days Harbhajan Singh and Manmohan Singh are working as apprentices under Pritam Singh but there is a race going on for earning more whereas the old art requires devotion. There is need to give some incentive to these artists in order to save almost dead filigree work.

Kar-Sewa and Its Historical Survey

The word 'kar' etimologically means work but in Sikh religion, this word has been used for a sqecial purpose. Perhaps this word was used for the first time by Guru Arjun Dev Ji who after Guru Ram Dass took up the task of making. Amar sarower Pakka & also cleaning it. The Guru told his sikhs that they should not call the mud as mud because it was saffron & when they served for this purpose, their work or 'kar' was their day-today work in service of the Lord which shall be recorded eternally. Therefore it is a misnomer to call it mud. He told them a true sikh always touches the dust of the feet of his brotheern to his fore head with honour. Therefore to carry that dust away from the tank, was a grace of the Lord.

Hence it would be correct to say that during the time of Guru Arjun Dev first kar sewa of Amrit Sarover was performed Guru Arjun Dev was so happy to see the zeal of the people that he said, 'Lord himself has come to work for his servents.' In those days the water in the tank come only from rains. Therefore it could never be filled to the brim.

After Guru Arjan Dev in 18th Century when the Sikhs were suffering and fighting a battle of existence. Amrit

Sarover proved to be a source of inspiration. No one can find in History such unparallel example of courage and sacrifice. when Lakh pat Rai stooge of the Mughals woed that a Kashatrya had started sikh religion and he who was aKashatrya shall exterminate them. With this challange he attacked Amritsar and filled up the tank with earth. Diwali came and the Sikhs were anxious to take a dip in the holy tank. Different Missals once for all gave up their personal differences and did 'Kar Sewa' or holy service above self. This time the tank was filled up with water from wells.

The heads of Sikhs had been priced by the Mughals and the Sikhs had to take shelter in forests and deserts, Faith was put to test. Military Governer of Amritsar Massa-Rangar descrated the temple and the tank but soon brave men Sukha Singh and Mehtab Singh from Mira-kot evenged the secrelige

Again in 1758 Ahmed Shah Abdali came with his forces to destroy this tank of the Sikhs which was famous for its miraculous healing power. He came to destroy the tank but Baba Nodh Singh, Baba Gurdux Singh & Baba Deep Singh made his plans unsuccessful. This time the tank was thorughly cleand & with the help of 'Harts' the tank was filled with fresh water again. But the tank had become an eye-sore for Abdali. After his victory in the battle of Panipat in 1762 he came with his full might and destroyed Golden Temple, as well as the tank. Cows were killed here on the land. But the Sikh missals showed themselves up and with in a short time by 1767 not only the tank but the temple again stood with its original glory.

In 1781 Mahant Santokh Dass started making efforts for making a permanent arrangement for filling the tank with water using his personal influence, he brought a small canal from River Ravi and started filling the tank with this water.

Now people began to come from far and near to take a dip in the holy tank.

If we consider 'Kar Sewa' from the Modern point of view then Maharaja Sher singh was the first man to have started it. In 1842 Maharaja Sher Singh asked Gyani Gurmukh Singh to arrange 'Kar Sewa'. The tank was devided into two parts and the work started. Maharaja Sher Singh became a bit egoistic, He said that he shall do the 'Kar Sewa' with his own finances. Gyani Gurmukh Singh made his best efforts to make him understand that KarSewa would always be incomplete without public participation. God so willed that the embarkment gave way and complete tank had to be dried. Maharaja Sher Singh realising his mistake gave a general call to Public and the Kar Sewa was completed.

After 81 years of that 'Kar Sewa' in 1923 public in general took up the task of 'Kar Sewa'. A'Kar Sewa' commitee was established and Bhagat Jaswant Singh was selected to its secretary. On 17th June, 1923 the work was started by five beloved ones. These five best persons were as under :

(1) Sant Sham Singh Ji

(2) S. Metab Singh

(3) Bhai Teja Singh Jathedar Akal Takhat

(4) Bhai Pritam Singh Sodhi from Anandpur

(5) Bhai Gulab Singh from Gholia village

These five best persons took up spades with handles of silver and blades of gold and carried the Kar in bowls of silver. In this 'Kar Sewa' Maharaja Bhupinner Singh from Patiala and other Sikh Princes took active part.

Fifty years after the 'Kar Sewa' of 1923 on 31st of March, 1973 the Kar Sewa of Golden Temple was started. The work was started on 13th of March. Electric pumps were fixed for drying the tank. When three feet water was left in the tank an embarkment was raise and one side of the tank was thoroghly dried. On 31st of March the five beloved ones started the work. This time the following persons were honoured as five best men.

(1) Sant Baba Jeewan Singh Ji

(2) Sant Baba Kharag Singh Ji

(3) Sant Baba Gurmukh Singh Ji from Patiala

(4) Sant Baba Sewa Singh Ji from Anandpur

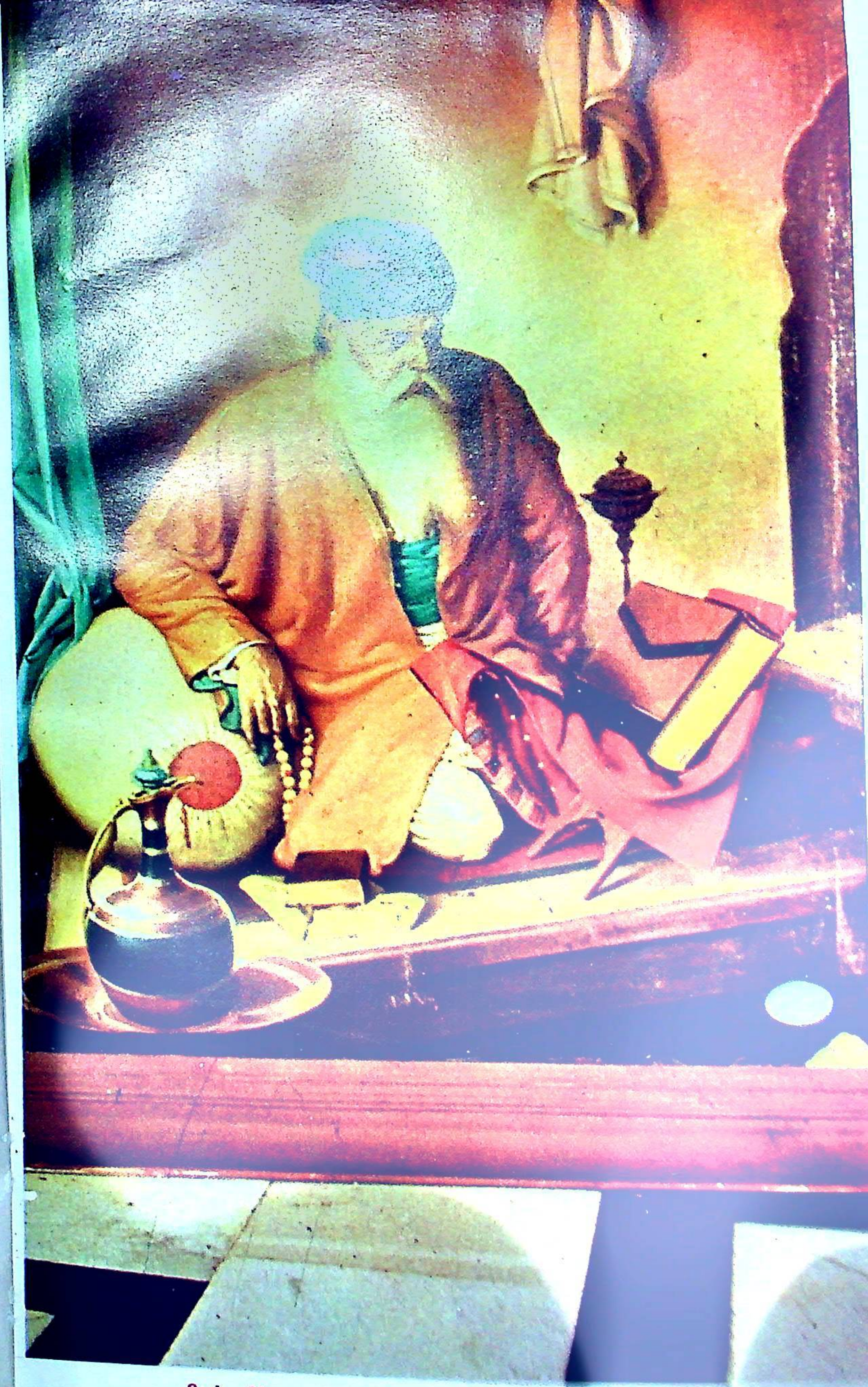
(5) Sant Baba Mohinder Singh Ji from Harkhowal

Golden Spades and Silver bowls that were used in 1923 were used by these holy men to start 'Kar Sewa' work. This time enthusiasm of the people was unprecedented. There were more than one million persons present in the Parkirma It was an uphill task to get a turn for carrying a bowls of the 'Kar'. When we count working hours, we are surprised to see that this 'Kar Sewa' was over within 10 working days. Community kitchen were organised all around the temple and 24 hours, one could get meals, hot and cold drinks.

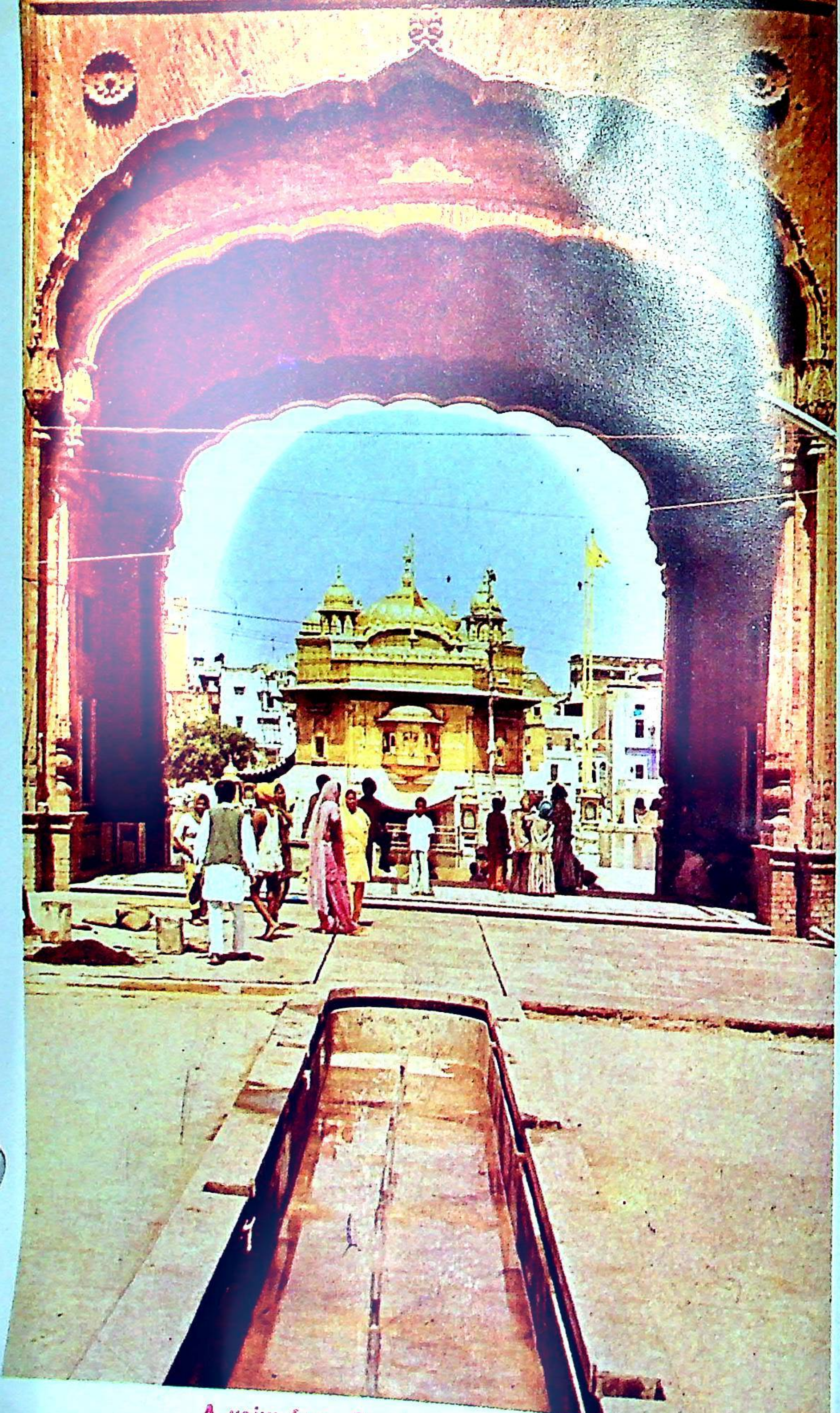
The main purpose of 'Kar Sewa' is to killnego in man. While working along with brethern. One forgets the distinction of caste, creed, colour, religion, sex and sect. No one is poor in the congregation and no one is rich. Every one works in union. The guru has truly said.

"Without Sewa these hand and feet are worthless"

this time the 'Kar Sewa' has established that the Sikh Nation is a living nation. There is yet a spark of life in them. This 'Kar Sewa' has given new demnsions to Sikhism. People have come to know that the Sikhs can stand together at the hour of the need. Long Live 'Kar Sewa' and the men who had and opportunity to contribute.



Sain Mian Meer who laid foundati



A yeiw from Sarai

GOLDEN TEMPLE

The main enterance of the Golden Temple is the clock Tower. and as one passes through the Tower, one sees, in front the temple in its gorgeous glory, right in the centre of a big tank, full to the brim with deep yellow-green water. The Temple is Golden because it is covered with gold both from inside and outside actually gold is beaten on copper sheets in the form of leaves. There are eleven grams gold in one square foot and over the whole temple there are 100 kilograms or 220 pounds of gold. The original name of the temple is Harmandir, which means the mansion of God.

Before I start with the story of the temple, I would like to tell you the story of the city. The place where you are standing was a jungle, before the year 1573. Many legendry and mythological refrences are attached to this land. If [we believe the Ramayana to be historical, it is said that Lord Rama had fought a battle with his sons, Lova and Kusha, at this place and that nectar was sprinkled upon them to revive them.

It is also belived that Lord Budha while on his travels happened to pass through this land that he was deeply moved by its beauty and calm atmosphere. So he suggested to his disciples that this was the most suitable place for meditation but to this fact we donot have an aunthetic record of this.

Time passed and the place was a cattle-grazing ground. During his travels, Guru Nanak happened to pass through

this land. It is at that time that he met Baba Bura Randhawa while he was grazing his cattles. The young boy at the age of nine got illumined by the fiery touch of the spiritualism of Guru Nanak. He talked in such vein with the master that Guru Nanak told him 'You are not Bura but Budha.' It was from this day that he came to the known as Baba Budha. Guru Nanak, bestowed upon him the previlege of anointing the Sikh Gurus to come. After passing away of Guru Nanak, Baba Budha became so associated with this spot that he became the first head priest of the temple and he lived a ripe old age upto the times of the Sixth Sikh Guru, Guru Hargobind Ji. It is beleived that Guru Nanak referred to the coming up of an important temple and an important town at the site he had blessed by his visit.

Time passed on and once Guru Amardas had a boil. A sikh brought to him a herb which cured him of the painful boil Guru's super spiritual powers told him that the place where from came this herb was going to be a town of importance, a town of history, where the history of the sikh religion shall be written. The town which shall give birth to the great Guru Granth and set tradition of a Universal prayer.

Now there are two versions, One says that Akbar had given some land to the daughter of Guru Amardas and the land is the same where this town stands to day. The other version goes that Guru Amardas had asked, Guru Ramdas to establish a town at the place where Guru Nanak had met Baba Budha and where from came the herb of cure. A town was also established, with a place of pilgrimage. It is then that Bhai Jetha Ji bought this land from the villages head men of Sultan wind, Tung and Chatiwind; the cattle grazing ground for Rs. 75, Akbari. Later he established on the same land a town which he named in the beginning as Guru-ka-Chak. But it was also called Chak Ram Dass. The Guru was a wise economist, that is why he called and invited men from fiftytwo different

traders to settle in the town. Thus the town began to flourish under the guidance of the Guru. When Guru Amardas had left for heavenly abode, Guru Ramdes came down to this town and settled. In a short time, this town became a floursing trade centre. Guru Ram Das had already discovered a place where he met an ascetic Bhai Santokha who is said to have been in state of meditation for a number of years. Guru Ram Das started the digging of a tank, there and also he laid foundation of a Dharamshala or a sort of a Temple. The temple today is known as Tahli Sahib or Santokhsar.

In the year 1576, another incident took place. There was a town named Patti some twenty seven miles away from the town Guru-ka-Chak A rich landlord Duni Chand one day asked his daughters as to, who was feeding them. The youngest daughter Rajni declared that God was a universal feeder of the whole humity. The story moves just like the story of King Lear Father in order to show his prowess and to punish his daughter he got her married forcibly to a cripple patient telling her, 'I shall see how your God protects you from death and which town gives you shelter.'

The girl was calm as her faith in God was complete and abundant. She knew that the only town which could give shelter to her was Guru-ka-Chak. As her husband could not walk. She carried him over her head to the town Gura-ka-Chak while she was on the outskirts the town she came across a beautiful shady spot under which there was a small pond of water. Thinking it to be a comfortable place, she kept her husband there and requsted him to wait for her while she had gone to the town to seek permission to live some where. She came to the presence of graceful Guru Ramdas and sought his permission to live some where in the town as well begged his blessings. The Guru told her, "Those who have faith in God, they need seek no help from me, rather God himself comes to help them and the very place which they visit, becomes the

place of pilgrimage." She was returning satisfied that she had found a place at last to live in, with her husband, Meanwhile her husband, who had been sitting by the side of the pond, saw a strange phenomina. At first he could not believe but soon his heart was getting light out of the mercy of God. He saw black crows would come to take a dip in the water and turn white in colour. He thought, he should try his luck by throwing himself into the water. At first his resolution failed him as he was afraid that he might be drowned But faith in God gradually drove away his fear and he threw himself into the water with faith that, life and death were in the hands of God and it was He who should know whether he was to live or to die. The result was equally surprising. The man in water found himself to be healthy, fit strong and kicking. When his wife returned, she found a healthy man sitting and waiting for her instead of an ailing patient. Both went to the Guru. Guru Ramdas told her, 'God has rewarded your faith and we shall build there a place for people to commemorate victory of faith So the Guru got the tank excavated there and named the tank as Amrit-Sarover.

Amrit stands for nectar and Sarover for tank. While the Guru was getting the tank dug, some people asked him about the importance of the tank, He told them that it would be as good or better fhan the 68 pilgrimage places of India, if one came there with faith and a contrite heart. If faith is lame and lacking and the heart is not the pure, it would be worst than water. The place where the Guru was sitting has since been converted into a platform known as 'Ath-Sath-Tirthi,' Thus the Guru during his life time, completed the digging work of the tank.

The place, where the cripple had been cured, since then, has developed around it a number of stories. The first story is completely non historical and mythological. They believe that when sea had been churned by gods and they extracted some nectar, the Rakshasas fell upon gods to snatch away nectar,

So the gods had hidden one of the pot of nectar over here which was discovered by the Guru.

The other story talks of the Golden age, When King Ikshwak performed a Yajana to create a pilgrimage place in 'Madar Desh', ie the Punjab. God being pleasad with the King. brought water from the 68 pilgrimage places and told the king that the Tiratha would disappear and later again come into existance during Iron age when the people shall again have the benefit of its nectar-like water.

what the Guru wanted to prove was that, when faith is firm and it is not lame, one can rather make demand on the bounty of God rather than beg it of Him God is good and reasonable and he knows truthtul heart of man, very soon.

Some people believe that Guru Ramdas could not complete the tank during his life time. But it is not a fact, On the other hand, we can say that, the Guru had completed all the four sides of the tank during his life time, He left some part of earth in middle of the tank on which later, the temple was constructed.

By the time of fifth Guru, Guru Arjan Dev, a large number of Hindus and Muslims had become followers of the Sikh cult which was simple, practical and ritual free, The Muslim priest as well as the Brahmins felt danger to their trade. They reised a tirade against Guru 'Oh Muslims ! Beware, the Guru is not a Muslim, he does not have even a mosque to pray to God.' 'O Hindus ! Beware, the Guru is not a Hindu, he does not even have a temple to pray to God.' The Guru agreed gracefully that he was neither a Hindu nor a Muslim but he was a SIkh. The word Sikh etimoligically means a disciple. So even those who followed him, niether Hindus nor Muslims, but they were all children of one and the same God and his Sikhs, As regard a temple, he promised them to give one which will be truly a temple of God, and that God who wins over hearts of one and

all. That is how Guru Arjan Dev got foundation stone of Harimandir, laid in the year 1589. To give it bsauty and splendour of universal love,he got the foundation stone laid at the hands of a Muslim Fakir 'Sain Mian Mir.' The temple was completed by the year 1601.

During the period when the temple was under construction, Guru Arjan Dev Ji, the 5th Sikh Guru, sat at a place called Ramsar. and there he compiled a book which he named as Adi-Granth or the primeval book. In this book he included hymns and psalms, written by the Gurus, before him, his own hymns, and psalms, written by those Muslim Saints Who believed in one God, but not in secretarianism, psalms written by those Hindu Saints, who believed in one God, but not in idol worship and hymns written by those Saints who were called untouchable by the orthodox Hindus. Thus the holy book of the Sikhs was compiled with unique features. It was written during the life time of the Sikh Gurus. Out of 36 composers there are only six Sikh Gurus while other belong to different shades of opinion and religion.Thus it represents universal love and has a universal appeal.

The temple was complete in 1601,the book was brought in a procession in the year 1604 and was installed inside the Golden Temple. The Guru gave a new, unique and noble way of worship. He himself sang hymns out of the book and made others sing the same hymns. Thus the Guru broke the conventional and ritualistic way of worship inside the temple. His worship by singing truly represented the spirit that 'The real worshipper of God is he, who himself remembers God and makes other remember Him too.'

Now we come to the place where on the left side is the community (free) kitchen. The institution of the community kitchen is as old as Sikh religion but in its regular form it was started by the third Sikh Guru, Guru Amardas Ji. During Guru

Amardas's time, the Sikhs were a heterogenous mixture, all coming from different walks of life and outwardly different religion. Though they came to the Gnru for spiritual instrucion yet they were oonscious of their social entity and therefore, they would eat seperately, cooking, their own broth, The Guru removed this class consciousness completely by ordering that his Sikhs would take their meals together at a common community kitchen and that anyone who wanted to see him, must first take his meals together with others. So much so that when Emperor Akbar came to see the Guru, even he had to take his meals in the community kitchen or 'Guru-ka-Langar' before meeting the Guru. Therefore the community kitchen is a practical social leveller, where all come irrespective of caste, creed, religion, sex, sect, rich, poor, high and low and sit together and share those meals and there is no discrimation no speciality and no particular favour shown to anyone. The kitchen's food stuffs come from the contribution made by different people according to their capacity and desire, Some give in cash and others give in kind. Afterwards, all those who love, come and cook together, remembring and singing hymns in praise of God, That is why the food from Langar is so delicious, although it is so simple. There is good-will and love in every action. In this kitchen they cook about six bags of wheat flour every day.

Some people might mistake that the kitchen is nothing but a source to encourage beggary. But it is not true. On the other hand it is an institution of the labour of love. Besides this kitchen we have here a place, 'a temple called temple of Baba Attal Rai.' Baba Attal was a son of the 6th Guru. The boy at the age of nine, once brougt a dead, boy, back to life. When the Guru came to know of this incident,he admonished the boy that life and death were in the hands of God and men should not interfere in His ways. The boy being sensitive decided to give back one life and therefore lying at the place he gave up his own life. Later a towe was raised in his

memory and it is said that there shall be no building higher than that of 'Baba Attal'. Anyone who shall come there, his wishes shall be fulfilled and that no one shall go hungry from there. Now in the temple of Baba Attal Rai when someone wants to offer some communion he distributes chapatties and Dal (Lentils). Thus anyone who does not want to ask for meals, may sit there and he shall receive food without asking. Thus it is a record of the city of Amritsar that no one has ever gone to sleep hungry in this town and no one shall ever go to sleep hungree.

As we enter again inside the golden Temple we find in all the four corners drinking water service. Here all the work is done voluntarily, Here nearby on the floor, there is a round spot and on the lefthand side there is a picture of Baba Dip Singh Ji Shahid carryiug head on hand. In the year 1757-58, Ahmad Shah Abdali had attacked the Golden Temple and descreated it. Hearing of the descreation of the temple, Baba Dip Singh at the age of 79 started with his companions towards Golden Temple. While fighting 5 miles away he was mortally wounded. His head was almost cut. Even with served head, he kept on supporting his head with left hand and went on fighting with the right hand till he had reached the princicts of the temple and died here.

Now we come to the gate of the temple. On the right side of the gate, there is a small tree (Jujubee). It is under this tree that Guru Arjan Dev Ji used to sit and watch the work of the temple, when under construction. Later on in the year1740a hair-raising incident happened.The sikhs were being prosecuted ruthlessly. A Muslim Governor, Massa Ranger by name, thought of sacrilege to the temple. He rhoght that the Sikhs were no where near about and he made a dancing girl dance inside the temple. When the news reached the sikhs who had retired into deserts of Rajasthan to avoid prosecution. Two of them named Sukha Singh and



Mehtab Singh of Miran Kot Village could not tolerate it. They asked the Sikh congregation there to start non-stop recital of the Guru Granth there and they set out for Amritsar to avenge secrilige of the temple. They took a woe that either they shall die or be back with the head of Massa Rangarh before finishing of the recital of the Guru Granth. They reached Amritsar, came to the temple, tied the horses with this tree and went inside the temple reaching inside, they drew out swords, Beheaded Massa Rangarh, put his head on spear, walked through the Mughal soldiers telling that they were carrying the head of their Governor. They could do whatever they liked but the Mughal soldiers were so frightened that they ran away helter, skelter considering that Sikh soldiers were lying in ambuish. Two men carried head successfully back to Bikaner before the reading of the holy Granth had been completed.

We come to the Gate and enter the temple. As we walk over the bridge we enter the main worship hall. On the left hand side, are sitting the musicians singing psalm from the Guru Granth itself. The service inside the temple starts early in the morning at 2 A. M. This is the singing service. People just come they sit, listen and go home. This singing goes on in the temple till 11-00 P. M. in the night.

For three hours, when doors of the temple are closed, volunteers come, and wash and clean the whole temple during these hours. Outer walls are inlaid with semi-precious stones, The work is also known as pitra-dura work. This workmanship was common in India during the 16th and 17th century. Some people try to compare this pitra-dura work with that of the Taj. But there is a lot of difference in designs. In Mughal pitra-dura there are no human or animal figures. Mostly the emphasis has been put on giving deep or light shade to flowers that are decorating the wall. But herein we find that whereas the technique of the shade is thare, there is also small work

depicting miniatures flowers. The inlay here is an example of patience and endurance of the artist. The stones used are semi precious such as corlinean, jade, agate, lapislazuly and jasper. All these stones have been cut into a certain size. The marble plates have been cut and dug according to design and then the stonos have been fixed. In modern times it is very hard to find such good artisans.

We now move upstairs, on the first floor. This floor is an example of extravagant beauty.Walls are beautifully painted in filgree. walls are pasted with plaster over which gold leaf has been pasted. Later this plaster has been cut into different designs with mirrors in the background. Ceilings are studded with precious stones, Gold work and mirrors. Thus the inside simply enchants the eye whereas heavenly music is enchanting the ear. Here at three places a non-stop recital of Guru Granth Shaib (The Sikh holy book) is going on. It takes forty eight hours to finish one reading. One man reads for four hours and six men make twenty four hours. Thus it goes on here day and night. The atmosphere is so pure and holy that even the non-belivers in God have once felt presence of God, or something higher than their intellectual sense, over here. This non-stop reading is done for the people in their names. People deposit some money with the temple authoroties and then reading is arranged for them. There is such a long que that a man deposit money today, his turn comes after two and a half year. There is still a roof above, in the second story in this room mirror work of a very high quality is done on the walls. It is a pity that time has told upon this work and it is almost falling.

As we come down, a porridge is being served to people. It is prepared from wheat flour, butter and sugar. People belonging to any caste, creed, coluur, religion sex or sect, can offer it inside the temple.Priest keeps a part of theout offering and whatever he keeps he sends it out to be distributed



Baba Deep Singh preparing for a Bettle in 1758



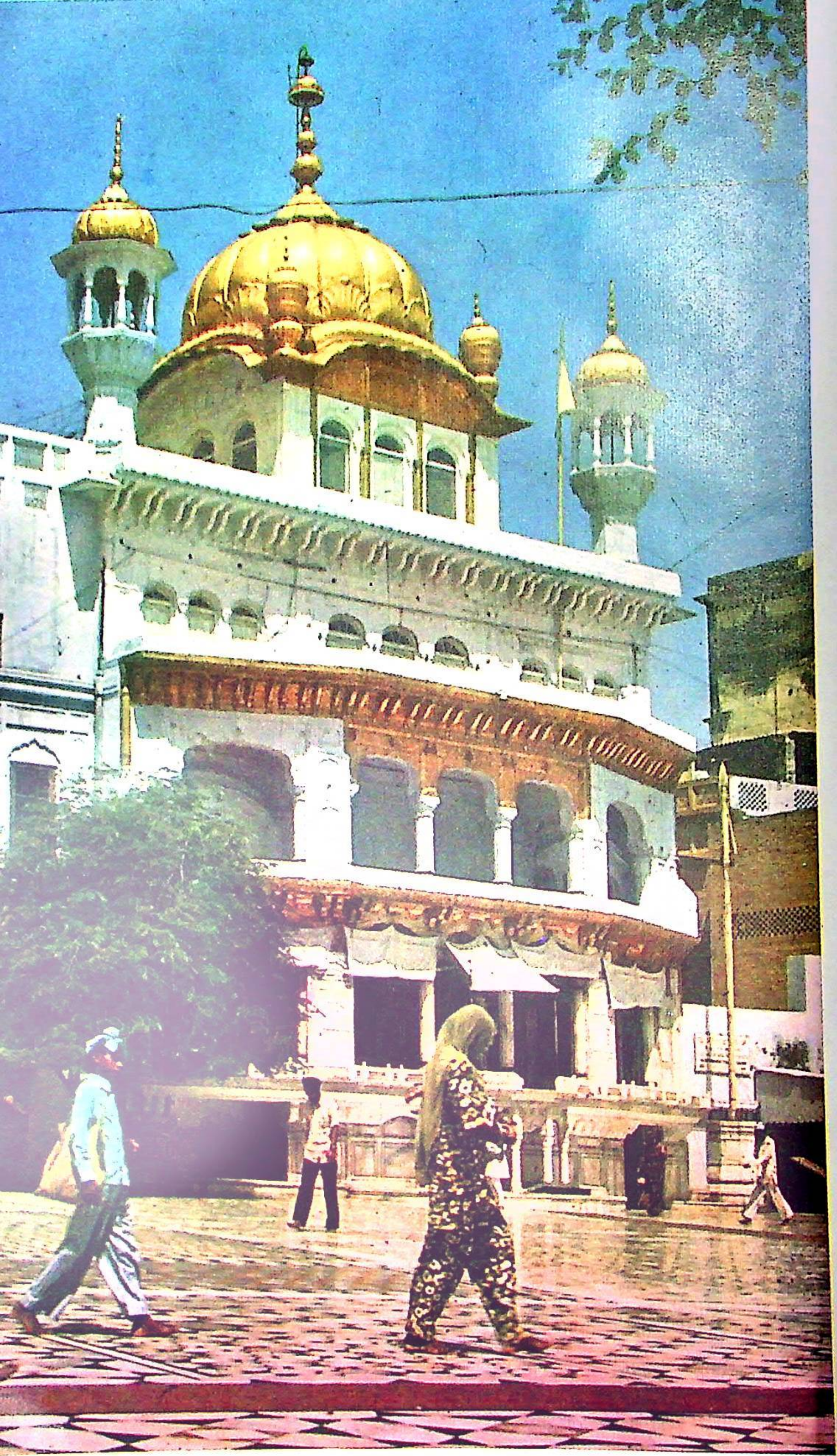
Weapons of the Sikh Gurus at Akal Takhat.

without discrimation of cast and creed, Thus again an emphasis is put on equality of man and humanity.

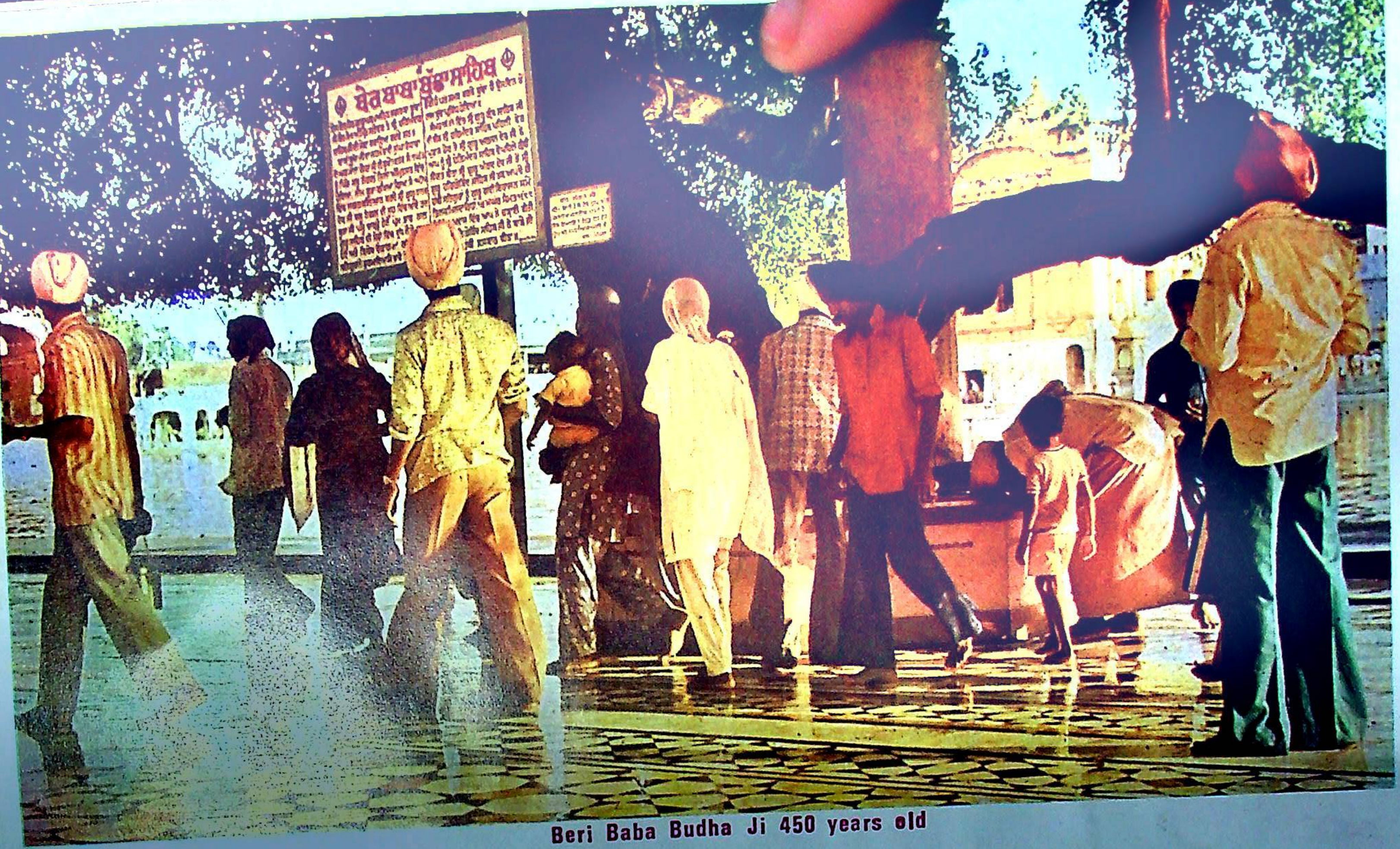
As we moved out, in front of us, is Akal-Takhat or the divine-throne, It is here that the sixth sikh Guru, Gnru Hargobind had taken upon himself two swords, the sword of the spiritual power and the sword of the temporal power and from here, started the temporal activity in the sikh religion, In fact today Akal Takhat is the symbol of the political activity of the Sikhs, All great movements have been led from the seat ot this Takhat. Whenever the Sikh Nation has come across a danger it has rallied round this Takhat to get inspiration and leadership. Inside, in an enclosure, there are the origlnal weapons of the Sikh Gurus. As the enclosure is opened we see the sword of spiritual power and the sword of temporal power of Guru Hargobind Ji. We also have there a sword of Baba Budha Ji, the first head priest of the Golden temple. Besides that there is a sword of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Here there are two arrows of the 10th Guru Gobind Singh. A remarkable thing about these arrows is that there are eleven grams of Gold attached to each arrow. Guru Gobind Singh had always fought for the cause of truth. His idea was that the wounded could get his wounds dressed after selling Gold and one who died, any one who recovered his body could arrange burial or burning accordingly. There is also sword of Baba Dip Singh, Baba Gurbux Singh and Baba Nodh Singh. A club belonging to Guru Hargobind Ji also lying here.

Besides this there is a room in which Guru Granth Sahib kept for rest in the night. It is carried in a palanquin early in the morning in a procession and similarly it is brought back at night. Outside Akal Takhat stand two flag poles indicating unity between the temporal and religious forces. In the middle is the emblem. One sword stands for spiritual power and other stands for temporal power. In middle there is double edged-sword meaning to cut evil both ways. Circle means

continuation of life and in the middle of it the word is Written (੧ੳ) Ek-onk-kar. It means God is only one, Going ahead we come to a very big jujubee tree. It is said that under this tree Baba Budha Ji, the first head priest of the Golden Temple used to sit and watch the work of the temple being done when it was under construction. Baba Budha Ji was known as Boora during his child hood. The round of the temple is complete and we come out of the Gate again from the clock tower side.



Sri Akal Takhat Sahib.



Beri Baba Budha Ji 450 years old

The Jewellery–Tosha Khana

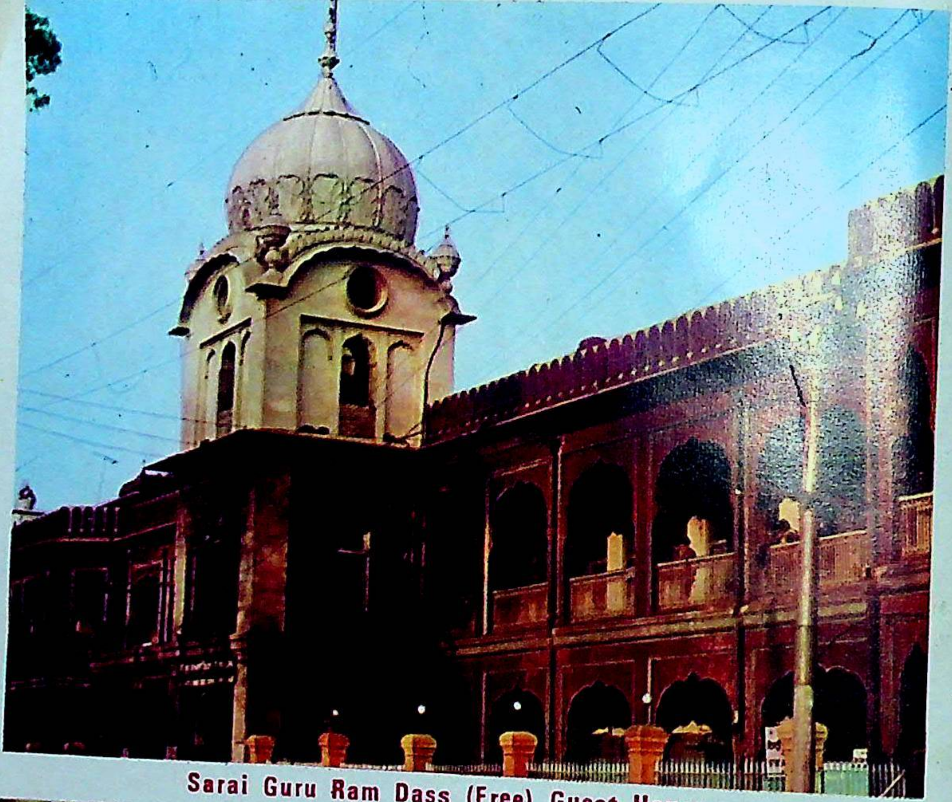
There is famous Jewellery in Tosha Khana. This jewellery has not only the money value but it has untold historical value as well. As we enter the jewellery room, we are attracted by four Golden Doors. On one door the artisans have made flowtrs and the other three doors depict different aspects from the lives of the Gurus.These doors were presented by Maharaja RanjitSingh.tl is said that atthat time on each door,Gold worth Rs. 3000 was spent. The whole jewellery is displayed five times in a year, ie. (i) Birthday of Guru Nanak (ii) Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh (iii) Birthday of Guru Ram Dass (iv) Guru Gadi Nashini (anointment) of Guru Hargobind and (v) First instalation of Guru Granth Sahib in Golden Temple, After the doors we are attracted by beautiful Golden palanpuin pres-eneted by American Sikhs. Just above the palanquin in a box is Martyred Guru Granth Sahib of Nankana incident, This incidenf took place on 20th Feb. 1921, The Guru Granth Sahib is placed for Drashans in Guru Nanak Hall, Manji Sahib on 21st Feb. every year.

Now we come to the big Show Case in top corner are hanging two fly wisks, one with handle of Silver, this one has been presented to the temple by the head priest of dargah Ajmer Sharif on the occasion of eight hundreth birth centenary of Sheikh Farid. The other fly wisk is golden it has been prese-nted by the Panjab and Sind Bank. Besides this is the sword of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Its hilt is of pure gold and it is studed with emeralds and Rubbies Down in the show case are five spades with silver handles and blades of gold. In 1923 when

Kar Sewa of Golden Temple, tank was performed the five beloved ones started the task with these. Again 1973 March the same were used by the five beloved ones. Once again on 11th March 1976 Kar Sewa of the tank of Gurdwara Dukh Niwaran Patiala was started with these spades and silver bowls. In 1973 the Panjab and Sind Bank presented the temple with one Golden spade and five silver bowls. The Panjab Govt presented one silver spade and five silver bowls. At that time Sant Kundan Singh from Jagraon presented the temple with one silver spade, one sword with silver hilt and one Sikh emblem ot Gold with silver stand.

There is one Canopy of Gold it is twenty pounds in weight On the top of it is a peacock, its neck is of pure Sapphire Stone in a single piece. According to a jeweller only this piece of Sapphire shall not cost less than four million of Rupees. The stone is without any blemish. In its eyes there are diamonds. In all on this conapy there are 3600 diamonds studed and 101 big pearls. Just under it is a diamonds headband with strings of Pearls. This head band was made by Jewellers of Lahore on the marriage of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's first son. The Maharaja offered the same to the temple without using it. Its cost at the time of presentation was about 9 lacs of rupees Then in a studed necklace presented by devotees and family of Sant Sujan Singh. Down in the show case is a silver plate with wood frame. In 1974, when President, Secretary and other officer bearers of S. G. P. C. had paid a visit to U. S. A. Then American Sikhs presented an address of honour to them in New York. Besides this is a small conopy of gold for the temple of Baba Attal. In the background shines a big double edged sword. In 1940 large number of Sikhs at Aligarh in U.P, (about 20,000 persons) were baptised and Amrit (nectar) was prepared with this Khanda.

Then comes decoration of Akal Takhat. There is a Canopy of gold 20 Lb. Then there are two head bands presented by



Sarai Guru Ram Dass (Free) Guest House



devotees. Then are five necklaces, One small Conopy and one ring with a Sapphire in middle and eight diamonds around. It was presented by Princess Bamba grand daughter of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, daughter of Prince Daleep Singh. Then there are jewels from the house of General Dhana Singh Malwai, a general in the Army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Recently a pearl necklace of three strings and three diamonds has been presented by American Sikhs from U.S.A. who came to pay a visit to hour Guru Ram Dass,under the guidance of S. Harbhajan Singh Yogi. Its value lies in sentiments of Americans who have been enchanted by Sikhism. In a box down is a pricious gift from a turkish muslim Haji Maskeen, He made two fly wisks out of Sandal wood. On one he spent 1120 Lb. Sandal wood created 145,000 hair out of it and spent 5 years and 7 months in making one. One he presented at Mecca. While taking a circumbulance in the Hiram he saw a small crack in the wall, which was attributed to Guru Nanak's visit. He was so deeply moved that he read whetever he could read about Guru Nanak. In 1925 he paid a visit to Nankana birth place of Guru Nanak. Finally he paid a visit to Golden Temple. He was so moved with open armed reception that on 31st of Dec. 1925 he presented this fly wisk to Golden Temple and in turn Golden Temple management give him a Saroopaoo of 101 Lbs.

There is one Sikh Emblem in gold presented by Karnal temple on tri-Centenary Martydrom March of Guru TegBahadur the ninth Sikh Guru. There is one sword made with gold presented on this occasion by the Gurudwara of Tarawary.

The last item is a Conapy of cloth studed with diamonds The Nizam of Hydrabad had presented it to Maharaja Rantji Singh as his gratitude for the help he had received from Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The Maharaja, atonce sent it to the temple without using it. In 1905 come here King George V as Prince of Wales. Outside on clock Tower side in a Darbar

that was held. This canopy was put over the head of British Crown prince by the Sarbrah of Golden Temple. Once used by a man it has not been used in the temple. Now it is very old and worn out. The smallest stone in the canopy is not less than 500 rupees to 5000 rupees and a big stone may cost as much as 35000 rupees. At the time of presentation its cost was above eight million of rupees. Value of Jewellery is not to be estimated only in gold, but it has tremendous historical value.

Note : Please read the following Paragraph from the 33rd line of the page No. 23 after 4 words.

In 1911, King George V came to India for Delhi Darbar. The conopy was taken to Delhi, by the Sarbrah (the British Manager) of Golden Temple. It is said to have been used in his Darbar (Court). The British kept the Conopy with them for over one year. It is believed that they had replaced the real stones with artificial.

Sikhism—A Comparative Study

It is quite interesting to see that foreigners generally are rather curious to know what 'Sikhism' is and how for it is different from Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, As a matter of fact, some times I have heard staunch Muslims and Christians saying that whatever they have heard about SikhReligion is not different from Islam or Christianity. I have also heard some Hindu brothers remark that Sikhism is nothing but a form of Hinduism. They call Sikhism simply a branch of Hinduism. Such misunderstandings are numerous and some times they gave a wrong lead. In fact every individual seeks to give his own version of Sikhism from his own point of view and none is able to give a detatched account of [the Sikh religion as it stands. I should try to go into the customs only logically and see the differences as well as similarity of the Sikh religion with other leading religions so as to formulate a clear picture of the religion and to see it in its proper prospective.

What is Sikhism ? Before I answer this question I have to go retrospective a little. When Guru Nanak was born condition of India was rather fluid. Religions has lost face and as Arnold says, 'We are here on a darkling plain, confuced with the alarm of struggle and flight where ignorant armies clash by night.' Bhai Gurdas a great Sikh writer who had had the honour of compiling the Guru Granth, in his writings depicts the conditions as tragic. There was no law and order and people were completely disillusioned. Pecple hated one another and the Hindus were leading a life of humiliation whereas they tried to express their superiority in class conciousness while they were down-troden politically. Guru Nanak

saw truth and real values of life. He wanted to remove class consciousness and separativeness and bring in unity. When he said God is one there was a difference in his saying. he did not call God his personal God but he was universal irrespective of caste, creed, colour, religion, sex or sect, and when he said, "We are all His children", he meant it. He wanted people to live practical life. Some people would tell me certainly that he did not give anything new but I believe that Guru Nanak gave real practical life which one could lead. He took in to consideration emotional life, physical life and Psychological life. He did not use the regidity of the Hindus for the achievement of his cause. He did not want water tight compartments. He said, "Truth is high, higher still is truthful living". When he said this he referred to life of conduct. He readily asserted and believed that true one resides in all. The Hindu ascetic had wasted his life time in finding that true one. Guru Nanak found it in all. To give balance to emotions and physical urges he asked a man to lead a married life, earn by hard labour and then share his earnings with others. To give psycological truth he sought True One in all and to him all were the invaluable gems. He was dead against rituals and ceremonies. He called all the days and months good when there was a grace of God over man. Whereas he was against Hindu ritual of prayer with many lamps, he was also against going in Nimaz without a true heart. At Macca he proved that God is everywhere. It is not the ritualistic respect but the true respect that only need be given to God and that is given by Good deed or to say with character. Thus he lay stress on the conduct of man. In the beginning Guru Nanak did not teach or preach a religion. Neverthless he taught a way of true and disciplined life. His followers were called Sikhs, disciples who were ready to learn from him that practical life which he thought to be clean. In fact he believed in the true cleanliness. He said when your body gets dirty you wash it with water, if your clotnes get dirty you wash them with soap, and when your soul gets dirty

you can clean it with the name of God. Thus evils can be removed if one truely believes in God and also brings in the proper discipline of life. Thus he prescribed a set of rules for a honse-holder. He put much emphasis upon hard earned money, true labour and honest livelyhood.

Till the fifth Guru the same ideals were carried out. No doubt the thought was magnified and examplified by the lives of the Gurus.They introduced Sewa or service to infuse in man humility and love for humanity. They introduced 'Langer' or a free common kitchen to remove class distinctions and economic depression of the society. Thus they created a great community where all were children of one great God without discrimation and distinction.

During the time of the fifth Guru the Pandits saw a great danger to their livelihood and the traditional belief. Therefore they said, "The Gurus are not Hindus". We ostracize them. Similarly the Muslims also saw danger to their identity and they declare that the Gurus were not Muslims. It is at this time that Guru Arian Dev, the fifth Guru declared emphatically that he was a Sikh alone. Thus the word Sikh came to establish its meaning as a seperate sect or a religion. Guru Arjan, therefore, established his own church by building'Hari Mandir' i. e. the Golden Temple, the first Sikh temple ever to be built. Before this there were only 'Dharamsalas'. He gave practical shape to his ideas by giving four doors to the temple and also by giving the worshipper, worship free from rituals. The four doors give invitation to all from all the four sides to visit and pray to God. Similarly the dome gives an idea that like a Lotus a Sikh should live in the world free from the evils of the world and to add to all this, he got the foundation stone laid, at the hands of Saint 'Mian Mir' a Muslim Faqir. Thus he created a new life and gave a new meaning to Sikhism.

A metamorphosis came with Guru Hargobind, the sixth

Guru, as he Introduced the cult of power in the religion which had been, by then peaceful and peaceloving. The Guru gave a practical answer to tyranny. He infused such a spirit in the Sikh religion that even though untrained in the war affairs his disciples gave a crushing defeat to the imperial forces. By wearing upon himself the two swords he combined the religion with power. In fact the religion cannot be separated from the body politic, Guru Hargobind perhaps had an intuition as to what was to be in the near future. When the ninth Guru received a call for the protection of religion he wanted to make a supreme sacrifice before a final shape was to be given to Sikh religion. He wanted to show that the sword was the last resort He wanted to create and build up public opinion. Some people think that the Guru sacrificed himself for the protection of Hindu religion against the Muslims. No, he sacrificed himself for justice against the forces of negation. Incidently the forces against which he had to fight were led by Muslims. In fact his fight was for justice against injustice. Even Guru Gobind Singh fought egainst evils. He had to fight against hilly-Hindu kings who were supporters of evils. He had no idea whatsoever that he was fighting against Muslims. Otherwise how could Pir Budhushah a Musllim sacrificed himself and his family for the Guru ? Hence it should be noted that the Sikh religion' when it grew millitant it was only onthe basis of goodness and not for any help or opposition to any religion. Guru Gobind Singh himself has said, "I have no friend and no foe, I have good relations with all."

When Guru Gobind Singh baptized the Sikhs he made them Singhs or Khalsas. It was a complete change. He gave them a discipline or order. We should not forget it that when ever we make an organization we need a constitution, rules and regulation. Now there are two aspects of organisations, one outward and the other inward. Guru Gobind Singh gave five K's or five symbols starting with the word 'K', These 'Ks' have a dynamic importance in Sikh religion. First symbol is

Kesas or hair. He meant that God has created man as his own image and purest shape given by God is with hair and not without them. Men looks more masculine with natural hair. At the same time he did not make them ascetics. he wanted them to be successful householders. He would make them ideal and balanced men. Therefore he gave them the second 'K' a 'Kanga' or comb i.e. to say to keep hair clean and in a disciplined shape. As one combs one's hair everyday to remove the dust and the dross, symbolically he wanted them also to comb their hearts to remove the evils of the world. When he gave 'Kara' or the iron bracelet, the third symbol, he meant to give a warning to all the Sikhs that they would do no evils with their hands. It was also to remind them that life moved like a wheel and had no cessation. The bracelet was iron made because iron stands for truth and righteousness. The fourth 'K' 'Kirpan' or sword made every Sikh a knight who was to fight for justice. The word Kirpan made of two words 'Kirpa' and 'Ann'. Kirpa stands for blessings and 'Ann' for honour. So it is blessing for the honour, when it is in danger. It enjolns upon him to draw it out when there is oppression and unjustice and when tyranny become unreasonable. Thus a Sikh is dutybound like a knight to fight for justice irrespective of allegiance. Because they were knights, they were given the Turban as the head-gear or a crown of a knight to show position. Hence the turban carries no ordinary meaning and it cannot be replaced by any other head-gear. The 5th 'K' is 'Kachhera' or shorts which is an active dress. To-day it keeps a man covered in all cases. These 5 symbols were created as outer discipline for the religion. The inner discipline came for the conduct of a Sikh. Thus the organisation of the Sikh religion became completely disciplined like the army with set rules, yet so flexible. For the out sider the religion is broad-minded and it gives him all welcome as he is also a child of the same and one God.

In Sikh religion the prayer is also different from all other

religion. In it the first thing to remember is basic force i.e. 'Bhagwati' Then we recall names of the Ten Gurus, one by one, and later on all the historical events are retold, sacrifices of persons, hair raising incidents are remembered and in the end we seek goodwill and prosperity of the whole humanity. The Sikh prayer like the religion itself connotes Universalism.

Thus the Sikh religion is most modern and logical. Now we shall try to seek differences of thought in Sikh religion with other major religions of the wor'd. First of all we take the concept of God. Muslims call God as 'Allah' and between him and the name they have intermediatries. Such as Mohammad etc. and one who does not believe in 'Allah' is an infidel. For them it is essential that God must be remembered in a particular way. They have five Nimaz or prayers in a day and believe it to be a good deed to convert others even by force. Thus it is Secretarian God. It makes discriminations even though it believes in One God. On the other hand in Christianity God has to be sought throgh the medium of Jesus. Jesus is the priviliged son of God. Jesus alone can carry sins of all. One has to pin one's faith in him. It makes God subjective to some recommendations and Christianity also refers to Trinity. In Brahmnical reiigion God has been given various names according to the forces of nature and hence there are many gods.

Now in Sikh religion God is only one. He may be named in any way. Three is no need of a recommendation to know Him and one can hold account of God to himself any one who tries can find him. Sikh religion does not hold a person believing in other religions to be an infidel. All are good, let them believe in their own way. In Sikh religion neither there is any bribe nor bait nor force to convert a man to the religion. There is complete belief and surrender to God. Sikhism admits of no doubt in God's existance.

Certainly there are no death and birth rituals in Sikh religion worth the name. In Hinduism, Islam and Christianity there are certain set rituals and rules. In Christianity, Islam and even in Hinduism an infant is baptised but in Sikhreligion baptism takes place only when a child grows to be major. He is given teaching during his childhood yet kept free from the chains of disciplined of religion.

In Christianity there is principle of loving one's neighbour, in Islam they give a call of sharing good with the men of faith Sikh religion gives a call to any one who is under the sky. That is why most of the Sikh temple have attached with them free kitchens. The food is contributory. In Sikh religion free physical labour carries a great importance. It is 'Seva' which makes men really humble and also shed his complexes. In fact the Sikh religion teaches the concepts of service above self in the real sense.

Even the Sikh holy-book i.e. Guru Granth is a unique book of its own type. All the religious books of the worlds are almost inspired or having been written by one man under certain divine influence and thus hold a secretarian view. The Guru Granth is univarsal and secular. It is a compilation of the works of the Sikh Gurus, Hindu Saints, the Muslim saints and the untouchables who belived in one God. Thus the Sikh bible has its own greatness, incomparable to other holy books.

No doubt in Islam there is no caste system as is in Hibdus yet it encourage slavery and in them there are Shi s and Sunnies sects who are at dager's drawn with each other. In Christianity there is no remedy of colour bar. In Sikh religion there is no caste, no creed and all are the childrenof the same God. Humanity is the real caste of a man and his position is

known from his action. His caste depends upon his deeds and man is known to be a man from his action. Thus the Sikh religion combines the positive points of all other religions and makes an effort to make life practical and effective. There is no blind faith in this religion.

Why do I feel satisfied with the religion I hold ?

The question of being satisfied with one's religion is rather complex. I would ask, does a man know his religion when he is born ? Has he come to it with the help of inner current of his own conscience or it is something external which has been forced upon his concious mind ? Does he feels really pleased with the religion, its tenets, its scriptures and its prophets ? Finally, when he is professing to be some thing is he honest to his own best khowledge and belief ? Yes, I am standing to answer all these questions and many more I believe that I am a Sikh in true sense, as I am always open to correction and new learning, and that is what a Sikh means to me. Of course I was born in this religion and as an infant I knew not my religion, but certainly I was born 'Khalsa' i.e. the purest one only created by One, universal God who does not hold discrimination and who is epually kind to all, So he was kind to me and he put me into the arms of the mother earth to grow to be His student and disciple i. e. a 'Sikh'. Again my religion has come to me in a process of gradual revelations of facts and ideals. I was not at once initiated or baptised into it. As a child I had a certain conception and image of God, that I held to be true, and it kept a process of transformation and understanding.

As I talk to you about my religion I am objective in its study and subjective to my own self I have tried to understand not only my own religion but I have made efforts to appreciate other religions as well. I will take up S kh religion with

reference to spiritual food,economic needs and social relations separately. I think we shall try to appreciate its tenents and understand them. If I am not wrong and am not exaggerating my statement then I can say that the Sikh religion in fact is a practical way of life and gives fullest satisfaction to one and all those, who understand it. It is complete and comprehensive in all directions. I take up first of all the spiritual side.

Spiritually the Sikh religion believes in one God, who is universal, loves all without discrimination and belongs to entire humanity rather than to one particular sect. This par is most appealing to me. My religion does not give any particular name to God : the names it gives are only some of the qualifications of God. At times we say,

EK PITA EKAS KE HAM BARIK

that is God is one and we are all his children without any discriminatian of caste, colour, religion, sex ar sect. Such a conception of God shall appeal to one and all. Again where as there is no idolatory in the Sikh religion, it does not hate those who are idol worshippers. The Sikh Gurus took pains to explain and express their view without hurting others. Whenever they were against some idea they dealt with it with reason.

Sikh religion is based on the four major ideals, (i) Kirat Karni, i. e. to work hard and earn honest living (ii) Nam Japna i. e. to remember God, every breath so that you donot become proud or power conscious (iii) Wand Ke Chhakna i. e. to share your income and food or comforts with others, and finally (iv) 'Chardi Kala' or ever inspiring optimism, Where as in olden times people had a philosophy of life which was rather pessimistic, people were mostly worried about after life. They did appreciate charity but not sharing income with

others on equal basis. When you give charity you feel superior and others are considered inferior. On the other hand, when you share, you share with your equals. It is this that has appealed to me most. Then the earning by hard labour gives a man some idea of self-respect. A man who knows that his living is honest he is always self-respecting and human in his behaviour rather than a dishonest man. Similarly the Gurus removed that fallacy which always told people that they could remember God only at a particular or special time. They have open door for all at all times. If one wishes one can remember God while working and while moving about. Thus the old idea that one must renounce the world is thrown to the wind and a new horizon of prayer to God is opened.

In the past old religions talked of salvation and that was the main request at the end of their prayer, In this way people developed a retarding mentality. In Sikh religion the prayer seeks optimism and this one js not clouded with the idea of haaven or paradise. Thus one is concerned only with the realities. Sikhism seeks to establish real life ond does not talk in theory. That is why the Guru says, Truth is high, higher still is truthful living. In this way emphasis is on the life that man lives and not on any other respect. Thus spiritually a man is rether free from the shackless of formalism and ceremonialism.

Socially Sikhism has brought about a great reform in Indian Society which is and was class-ridden and caste-ridden Caste of a man is humanity. One is not born low or inferior. On the other hand these are the actions which make one so. Hence by birth no one can be made superior. This education was given by Lod Budha but it was forgotten. Later, Guru Nanak again emphasized it. and though Sikhs in theory are against caste system. Yet I admit it that in particular life a majority of them still believe in it. But I am not disappointed

because still when 'Langer' community kitchen is there, all of them shed off the cloak of the caste for a while and thil is an encouraging sign which tells us that we may be able to crush it completely one day. Socially in another direction Sikhism has done a wonderful job. It has given people, dignity of labour. Yo do not become a bad man because of your profession, which might not look high in the eyes. Of common people who are mostly working on artificial basis of greatness in life. Labour or work when done honestly is always honourable, That is why there is selfless service in Sikh temples and at community kitchen.

Economic condition is attached with social condition and as such, those people who belive in hard labour and honest living, keep with them bright ideas of brotherhood and share with one another. The Guru simply wanted to restore the economic condition of those who were not very well off.

I must not omit another point in Sikhism, that is, the Sikh 'holy book' the Gutu Granth which is unique in itself. There are 36 composers and out of them only six are Sikh Gurus and others belong to all different religions and creeds. We should not take it that the Gurus were going to borrow from other religions, but in fact they did not reject what was good any where else. Then the book was compiled by the fifth Sikh Guru and the last four edited it and finally put the seal of authhrity. It is not a book which should have been compiled a single man as special revelation made by God or considered to have been written by God himself through his special son or messenger. Hense it has universal character and the beauty is that it has a very simple language. It is in verse form. Thus we find that Sikhism presents to me an ideal life. That a man can live and enjoy. At the same time it does not kill any human emotion or desire. On the other hand it simply puts a man under discipline and control. Hence Sikhism offers the proper dose.

Now I come to certain critics who some times have asked me about rationalism on keeping the form. Some of them have gone as far as that the forms kept in my religion amount to dogmatism and rituals. My answer to this Is very simple. True we keep a set form but we donot keep it as a ritual but as a part of discipline. Sikh religion is not result of stunted growth but is a result of proper growth established with care, wisdom and planning. It is not static but dynamic. It has accepted changes from time to time. Still we have "Gurmatta" with us to bring a change when needed. Guru Gobind Singh very wisly had said, "I live in the Khalsa and the Khalsa is my true image". Thus when we sit together in a congregation we are near God and the Guru. In fact it is the true "Panch Parmeshwar", which always lives in the congregation or the "Panj Piaras".

At the same time we must understand that just as the army people have a certain uniform and from the same uniform we recognise the people belonging to a certain unit, similarly Sikh Symbols are a sort of uniform and so we wear them as a soldier wears his uniform. We are recognised by them and as we know them so we declare this man is a Sikh just because he is keeping the disciplins of the Guru. Therefore, there is no formality or ritualism when we keep the forms. On the other hand they distinguish a Sikh from the other ordinery person.

Finally, I would like to say that the Sikh religion is most scientific in its outlook, that is why I love this religion and that is how it has given my soul a food which makes me really a satisfied person.

What is Sikhism and what do you mean by a Sikh ?

Sikhism is a religion started by the first Sikh Guru-Guru Nanak. He was born in the year 1469 A. D. At that time the condition of India was much disturbed because of outer invasion and internal dissentions. The people had lost faith in God. There was deep rooted hatered between the Hindus and the Muslims. Hindu religion had lost all its appeal for the common man, as it was full of rituals and ceremonies. Only very rich could follow this religion. The poor were despised and there was deep rooted caste system. The Muslims were heaping various indignities upon the Hindus and they had become corrupt and immoral. Guru Nanak was roused against these evils and he boldly opposed all that he considered wrong and had taken up his cudgels against caste system and rituals. He gave dignity to man as a man. He said, "Ek Pita, Ekas Ke Ham Balak" i. e, our father is one and we are all his children. He now taught the people that 'God is only one'. In Japji, the morning prayer, Guru Nanak gave the most profound definition of God, He says, "God is one, His name is true, He is omnipotent, He is without fear and also without enemity. He is free from transmigrations and His name comes to a man only by His blessings." Thus the God who had been divided by the Brahmins in thousand names, shapes and forms and sects and was intolerant of the other was given uniform all embracing and universal name. He was called 'Akal Murat', one without any shape, or Vah-Guru which means the one who removes darkness and brings light'. Guru Nanak also preached that

man should not hate each other, only because they belonged to a different sect or religion. He went to Kurukshetra and removed the fallacy that water and food reach God by force. He started giving water to his field and showed that such rituals were useless. At Jagan Nath Puri he taught to the Pandits that the real prayer 'Atri' of God was not with ceremonies but with contrite and pure heart. In a mosque he proved that no one present was praying to God. At Macca when a Muslim Quazi pointed out that his feet was towards God, he gave an effectionate reply, "turn my feet to the side, where God is not there". He then proved that God is every-where. His two companion of life were Bala and Mardana, one Hindu and the other Muslim. This showed his secular approach and catholic outlook of religion. He argued with love. He tried his best to convience but never tried to convert by force. He said, "truth is high, but higher still is truthful living." He was a saint but not an ascetic. He taught to live a pure life living in the world itself. It was a practical religion which was according to the needs of time and the people. People flocked around him. He won with his simplicity the hearts of his opponents. Those who followed him and his principles called 'Sikhs'. The word 'Sikh' etimologically speaking means a disciple, it is derived from the sanskrit word 'Shishay'. The word Sikh struck to those who followed the teaching of Guru Nanak as a name and that is why even now those who profess to have his faith are called 'Sikhs'.

Is a Sikh a Hindu also, If not what is the difference ?

In fact there is a big difference between the Brahmin and a Sikh. Brahmin worships Gods and Goddesses, They also

have faith in idol worship, They have caste system and also they have many rituals on birth, on death and so on. The Sikh religion was started against all these things. We do not have idol worship and rituals. We believe in one God and according to sikh religion there is no shape of God. He does not have any physical form. We donot believe in the incarnation of God. We donot give our Gurus the position of God. We only bow to that one God who is all-embracing and and ruling over the universe. There is no doubt that Sikhs are converts from the Hindus but that is the process of all the religions. Whenever a new sect or rellgion came it was just in revolt against some other sect or religion. We must not forget it that otherwise all religions of the world would tell something common. Islam and Christians also believe in one, yet they are different. But it does not mean that sikhism is against Hinduism. In fact Sikhism embraces all. It is a religion of love and human dignity. One, brother in a family may be Hindu and the other a Sikh. Blood makes them one but their religion is certainly different from each other. We donot worship the dead in any shepe or form. We believe that each man during his life time has to make his future in the eternal world of God by his own pious deeds. Not wealth but worth shall count in life, that is to say that men must follow a rigid disciplined life, but it does not mean that we should lead life of austerity and asceticism. One should enjoy all the comforts of the world, but he should lead life With higher deeds. Thus Sikh religion gives a practical way of life and as a religion it is distinct from other religions of India and has its own separate identity.

Why do you keep hair ?

Hair are part and parcel of human body. They are natural and the Sikh religion seeks to maintain and keep good nattural

things. We are enjoined to keep hair religiously. We have 5 religious symbols and neglect of anyone of them would excommunicate a s kh from Khalsa organisation. These five symbols namely are (1) Keshas i. e. hair (2) Kangha i. e. Comb (3) Kara i. e. iron ring worn round the wrist (4) Kirpan i. e. sword (5) Kaccha or the undergarment like shorts.

Now, hair occupy a very signifcant place in our life. When the 10th Guru, Guru Gobind Singh baptised the Sikh. He called them Khalsa (pure one) and Singh (lion). In fact he wanted to infuse in them the spirit of purity and ferocity and boldness of a lion, He styled them as saints and soldiers who were born Sardars (knights). Now the natural shape given by God to a man is with hair and not without them. It is later on that man has played with his natural shape given to him by God. He has from time to time kept hair to suit his whims. These whims and fancies have come to him only because of his lusty desire to attract the other sex. History gives evidence that in past ages all men used to keep hair. Even in Europe Men's hair envied, his mostaches were called the 'knightly growth,' and these things were signs of life. Jesus is shown with hair infact. He is called son of God and perhaps he wanted to keep godly shape given to him intact. In ancientIndia people were divided into Keshdharis and non-Keshdharis i. e. with hair and without hair. Men of high birth would never cut their hair. Cutting of the hair was only confind to lower classes. It was quite later that men started cutting hair and shavings.

The Sikhs have not betrayed time. So the Guru wanted them not to be busy always, in cutting the hair in different forms and thus becoming lusty and degraded. They have been asked to keep them as they grow and be saints, but should live in the world and when there is oppression, injustice and tyranny they are to fight like brave soldier, who does not value life above duty. But it does t mean that their

hair are to be dirty. I have already pointed out that the second 'K' is comb, so that they are supposed to comb their hair every day, and while combing they comb away dust and dross.

As for looking through the scientific point of view hair are better for a healthy body. Man is a social animal and all animals have been given a special coat of hair according to physical constitution. Are man's hair so unnecessary ? No the least. In fact man has artificially removed his precious gift of nature. If a man cuts his hair he has to regrow them. All that energy which is needed to regrow could be well used in other channels. If he did non cut his hair, on combing our hair, the unwanted and the dead hair automatically fall. A man with hair if he keeps them clean is naturally healthier and the Sikh religion is quite particular about cleanliness. A sikh is free from the obsession of sex, attraction and beautification. He has a natural personality, glowing and redient. He need not add artificial means. He is manly and not womanish. He is following the god's way and not the Devil way in which man is attracted towards vice.

Hence the question should be otherwise, why do we cut our hair ? What good comes out of cutting it ? and not that why do we keep hair.

When you not cut hair, why do you cut nails ?

I have already told you that the sikh religion is not at all against any natural process. Now when we comb our hair the live one remain intact and only the dead hair fall. Even if one cuts one's hairs this natural process does not stop. Similarly we have live nails, aed their colour is pink. when

the nails, grow beyond that limit they die and their colour becomes white. The nails which grow beyond the fingers start collecting dirt and with passage of time it would loose luster as it shall start crumbling and finally it would fall piece by piece, if we allow this thing, some time the dead nail may get entangled and also break the live one,which shall cause trouble and unnecessary waste of energy. So when we cut this dead nail we do not against nature. We rather observe the rule of cleanliness and sikh religion is very particular about cleanliness. No one can cut a live nail and if one does one should suffer pain. Therefore, there is no relevancy in the question, that we do not cut hair why do we cut nails. We allow the dead hair to fall and for the purpose we comb our hair every day and similarly we cut nails only to throw away the dead and useless bone of body. To keep body in a clean state is a religious duty of the sikhs and they maintain their duty in a zealous way.

Could you be more explicit about 5Ks and their difference ?

The five Ks are the essential five symbols of the Sikhs The Sikhs came into the present shape in the year 1699, on 13th of April. The 10th Guru, Guru Gobind Singh on that day held a big congregational meeting. He was holding a dewan or a group meeting when he emerged out of a tent holding a sword in hand, his face was glowing with rediance and he uttered all of a sudden that he needed 'head' of a man. There was dumb-founded silence. His demand was severe but is was certain that he had made this demand with a spiritual force and will power. Though all were stupified at that time yet there was a man who came forward gladly to offer his head to the guru. His name was Daya Ram. The word Daya, means 'mercy'. The Guru, with the man, went inside the tent and after a short while he came out with the sword dripping with blood and asked for another head of a man. Now Dharam Das came forward, 'Dharam' means 'religion'. Like wise the third demand was made and a man named Mohkam Chand came forward, Mohkam means 'bound to duty'. The forth call was answered by Sahib Chand, 'Sahib' means 'Our Lord', Similarly the fifth man was Himat Rai, which means 'Courage', Thus the five men were taken inside the tent and sacrificed. The Guru now brought them before public and adminisitered to them 'Amrit' nectar which he prepared by reciting five holy verses over them and stirring the water with a double edged sword. When the Amrit was ready, his wife put sugar wafers in that to

give sweetness to the newly created 'Khalsa'. 'Daya' or mercy is combind with Dharam or religion. Though it is supplemented by Mohkam or discipline still it is not without Sahib or the over lord and our lord has 'Himat' or courage to face raelities, Thus these five persons baptised by the Guru were called his five beloved one's and after that he himself stepped down from his seat and begged of those five beloved one's to administer him the Nectar or Amrit and create him the Khalsa or the pure one. As the Guru created the Khalsa so he gave them five symbols to wear, keep and maintain, for all the times like the assets of a true soldier. No sikh or Khalsa can remain Khalsa or a sikh without these five Ks. These five Ks. carry a deep meaning. Now I will relate to you the five K's and their significance.

The first K is 'Keshas' i. e. Hair. Hair from time immemorial has attracted man but he has been playing with them to make himself more appealing to attract the opposite sex towards him. In this way man has from time to time wasted this energy. The Guru wanted his Sikhs to be free from this evil he had called them 'saints' and Soldiers. Hence the question of making artificial looks did not arise with them. They lived Khalis or with the pure shape given by God to them.

The second K is 'Kangha' or the comb. It indicates that a Singh is not an ascetic but a saint. He must keep cleanliness with him. Cleanliness is next to godliness. He is enjoined to keep his hair clean. To comb them everyday, to dross them and give them discipline. The discipiine of the hair would teach them the discipline of the mind, so the comb tells as you comb your hair every day and clean them of the dirt and dross so you comb your heart every day to clean and clear it of the evils Our holy verses give account cleanliness of various types and say that man must Keep himself clean, and until and unless body is clean mind can not work there efficiently. Thus the comb is symbol of cleanliness and discipline.

The third 'K' is the Kara or the iron Bracelet. Now While the guru administered nectar to the sikhs he made them take a vow that they will not do any evil with their hands and shall always only earn the bread of hard labour. In order to keep them reminded of the promise made with him, he made them wear Kara or in a way 'Kari, i. e. that it was a sort of a hand cuff or morality, to remind that they shall do no evil and keep their promise with the guru that they would never break their promise. Moreover iron stands for truth and simplicity. All these weapons are made from iron while gold is for lust and riches. The touch of iron to the body is good for keeping blood active and energising a man. The roundness of bracelet stands for the continuity of life. Sikh religion believes that the soul is never dead and hence it continues to travel through the ages Thus an iron bracelet is a symbol of hard lapour, honesty and sincerity.

The forth 'K' is the Kirpan or the sword. The Singh were created saints and soldiers. A soldier must carry a weapon with him and the sword was a very affective weapon of the day. It was carried not merely for show. It showed the development of Sikh religion from a God fearing and loving religion to a religion of zealot fighters for the cause of justice and honour. Kirpan comes from the two words, 'Kirpa' and 'Ann Kirpa is blessing and Ann is honour. Hence sword is blessing for honour, when in danger. The sword indicates that death should de preferable to dishonourable living and that it is a greater crime to bow or compromise with evil than to fight an evil deor. Every sikh was given a sword so that at the time of need he may draw it out and fight against injustice, oppression and tyranny. Every Singh is a Sardar or a knight, who is duty bound to see that injustice is not done and he is, in this regard, to use sword when he finds that other methods have failed and that force is the only way left to him. Like a knight every sikh even now carries the sword as a symbol of righteousness, truthfulness, feerlessness and bravery. He is

to draw out his sword against anyone, when he finds that there is injustice. He is the foe of non and friend of all. He gives consideration only to right things.

No doubt today the sword has lost its importance as a weapon, yet the significance of the sword is ever there. it shall always remain like a clarion call for every sikh to see that he is not cowed down by oppressien and injustice. He is to draw out his sword i. e. to speak out and fight boldly for his rights. Thus this forth K is the most important symbol for the sikhs as it is a symbol of their life, honour and character as boldmen of justice and truth, who value not life but the values of life.

The fifth K is Kachara or the shorts that they wear as undercloth. Now in those days it was an active dress like the shorts and a soldier could be more active in this dress yet it also signifies control over sex desires. One who wears Indian type of shorts under, and with other clothes covering the body. He cannot easily indulge in evil activities During Mughal time it was a sign of revolt against the Mughal order that no Hindu could present himself to Mughals bare legged. The sikhs wore shorts and defied the order, Besides they were more active, At that time it gave vent to their sense of honour and sense of independence. We can say that even today it is better that sikhs wear under clothes and they are safe for emergency occasions. They can put off their clothes and yet they are not indescent. We must admit that it is a sign of control over sex desires.

Hence we have five beloved ones, five Ks and five leading principles of religious life and five holy religious verses to prepare nectar for baptism and hence fight five evils i. e. Kam, Krodh, Lobh, Moh, Ahankar to says, Lust, Anger, Avarice, Attachment and egotism.

Why do Sikhs wear Turban ? Can there be no other headgear ?

The sikh religion is based upon truth and its practice. History with Sikh religion has been a little harsh. There were many challenges thrown to the sikhs and they faught them as well. Where as in th3 beginning the sikhism attracted one and all, whether Hindus and Muslims, but the growing popularity of the Sikhs thought gave heart burns to the Hindu priests as well to Muslim priests. They began to fear that their trades in the religion had been hit hard. During the time of 5th Guru Arjan, it came to the surface and the Guru had to bear the brunt of it.

During the time of Guru Gebind Singh Ji, Aurangzeb wanted to insult non-muslim saint and prophets. He wanted to make the common Hindus feel miserable, He at that time declare that only the Muslims were the born Sirdars (Knights) and had a right to use Dastar (Turban) as a head gear. Hindus were only slaves and therefore, they could not use this head gear, which was a sign of respect and honour, But a knight has some qualities which were not present in all the Muslims, who formed the ruling class then. therefore when Guru Gobind Singh baptised the Sikhs, he called them Sirdars or Knights. They were told that they shall fight against injustice, oppression and tyranny. Hence they were Sirdars, and they shall put on their heads Dastar, the Turban as a sign of Knighthood.

The other thing, the Kach or the underwear was also a protest. Besides being an active dress, it was to show bare legs to Muslims against their order that the Hindus must come to them after covering their legs.

Now the turban is just like a crown and it cannot be replaced. If it falls, falls the honour of a sikh. Traditionlly the sikhs have given great honour to turban and place it high in religion. It must be respected because if it falls, the honour of a Knight is no more. That is why the Sikhs are sentimental as regards the question of turban and there is no question of any other headgear.

AGE AND TIMES OF GURU RAM DASS JI

Guru Ram Dass was born at Lahore in the year 1534, and he left for his heavenly abode in the year 1581. Of course he got Guruship only in the year 1574, for a very short period, but for the study of the history of his time, we have got to know the whole period of his life and the same period may be called Guru Ram Dass age. At the time when Guru Ram Dass was born Guru Nanak was 65 years old and the Punjab was passing through a period of termoil and chaos and the social and political life of the Punjab was passing through troubles. There was not a single decade which could find the Punjab in peace. People had lost all moral courage and there was no one who could voice the feelings of the people of the Punjab. Guru Nanak was a lone example of moral courage, who had exposed the evils of his time. It was he, who as a revolutionary, had complained to God of this callousness to the people of the land We shall therefore take up an historical survey of the Punjab between the period 1530 and 1581.

By the time of 1530 the Pathan rule ove India had already been cut from the very sap. It was a tree which needed the final knock to be destroyed. There were Internal rivalries and jealousies, The Pathans who were once hardy people had now become easy going and lovers of wine and women. That is why the already decaying Empire was disintegrating fast. Daulat Khan Lodhi the Governor of Punjab had already written requests to Babar to invade India. Babar who had not been

able to consolidate himself on the land of his forefathers,found a golden chance for adventure. Here the Pathans were thinking that Babar would come only to loot India and go away and they should be able to establish themselves here as rulers but this proved wrong. Rana Sanga the Rajput king and their leader, was also of this view that invasion of Babar would weaken the Pathans and that he might be in a position to establish himself. Even his dreams were shattered at the battle of Kanwha. All this termoil was hitting hard the areas of Punjab and people here were under constant pressure. We should not forget that whenever there was some trouble, Punjab was first to enterain and bear the burnt.

Babar won the battle of Panipat in 1526 and hardly had he consolidated his Empire when he died. Before his death he had asked Hamayun to treat his brothers well. Hamayun himself was a weakling and in words of Lanenepool he kept on tumbling through his life and tumbled out of it. When there was need to be in the saddle he was in his Harem and lost in opiumeaters Paradise. When there was need to be stern he was kind and thus before 1540 he lost his kingdom and had to run away from India. It is said during his retreat he passed through Khadur and waited upon Guru Angad Dev Ji to be blessed, as his father had been blessed by Guru Nanak. The Guru was in meditation and while he had to cool his heals he lost temper and was about to draw out his sword to slay the Guru that his conscience held his arm. Now the Guru opened his eyes and told him, that when there was need for him to draw out his sword he had wasted away that time in dreamlands and now against a saint he was going to show his power. He felt ashamed and begged pardon. The Guru told him that once again the bugle of the Mughals shall blow in India. While in Lahore his brother failed him and he retreated to Iran.

Now again, only for 5 years, there was peace in Punjab

and G.T. Road was constructed during this period by Sher Shah Suri. Just after his death the muslims proved that their's was the history of sword and throne and not of fathers and sons. The greed and neopotism were at their height. Hamanyun once again got a chance of conquering the lost empire but the poor fellow tumbled out of it. Akbar was coronated in Punjab at Kalanour. He had to collect and consolidate his empire. Punjab suffered again when Barim Khan revolted against Akbar and Kabal remained a sore for the Punjab till finally it was conquered by Akbar. At the same time it will not be out of place now to cast a glance at the social economic and religious condition of the Punjab.

Socially the Punjabis were divided into two basic classes. The rulars and the subjects, Muslims were the rulers and even they were divided into two groups. Those who had come from Kabul and Iran and those who had adopted this religion under force, fear and bribe. The foreigner muslims considered the local Muslims as low class people, They thought themselves to be higher than others. But these people were morally lost in wine and women bnt on the whole econemic and social condition of the Muslims was satisfactory. They lived an affulant life and enjoyed privileges. They would ask ladies of the Hindu families to come and work for them. Thus they enjoyed life in a better way. On the other hand the Hindus were leading an abject life. Most of them were poor, reduced to the condition of beggary. The only class that could be called monied was the merchant class, but outwardly they also lived like a poor as they lived in constant fear that any time all their wealth could be confiscated They were further subdivided in to many casts, and there was deep rooted hatered in this caste system. The Barahmins were the dominating class and they had provided for other Hindus so many rituals and ceremonies and had made them have blind faith in superstitions. The Sikh Gurus had forcefully raised their voice against these superstitions and

they had successfully made in-roads into the fortress of caste system and evils of superstitions. By the time of Guru Ram Das a large majorIty of the Hindus and Muslims had embraced their views and Sikhism was becoming a force to reckon with. It was shattering their dead dogmas and bringing in a new straem of consciousness among masses. Emperor Akbar while he had visited Guru Amar Dass, was deeply influenced by the institutioned run by him and had desired to help the Guru. Of course now the people were more drawn towards BhagtI movement and in shape of Bhagti there were more beggars in Punjab than ever before.

LIFE OF GURU RAM DASS JI

The land of the five rivers has been blessed by good many personalities. It was here that Guru Nanak gave a call to caste torn people to live in love. It was also here that his successor Guru Angad Dev brought those people together and gave them a new light of social revolution. Guru Ram Dass was the fourth light of the creed of Guru Nanak. He was born at Lahore on 24th September, 1534. His father was a businessman belonging to Kashatrya caste. He was just making both ends meet. The parents felt very happy on the birth of a son and named him Ram Dass. As normally in Hindu families the eldest son is khown as Jetha, Hence he was called Jetha in day to day life. At the time of his birth Guru Nanak was about 65 years old, Guru Angad 30 years old and Guru Amardass 55 years old Thus the first four Gurus in a way were contemporaries. Guru Angad had already met Guru Nanak but the latter two had yet to meet.

Guru Ram Dass was still very young when his mother passed away. Life of Guru Ram Dass in fact was not a bed of roses. He was hardly seven years old when his father also left for the heavenly abode. His maternal parents were living in a village known as Baserke. There he lived with his maternal grand mother.

Guru Ram Dass must have been shocked while leaving his hearth and home and those beautiful streets where he used to play. After all now a time of trial was coming for

Jetha. The third Guru Amardass was also living at Baserke. He developed a compassion for the child. He often used to meet him and give him whatever consolation possible. His maternal grand mother was not very well off. Therefore she thought upon the possibility of making Jetha self-dependent. She gave him the profession of selling boiled grams in the village.

Guru Amardass had taken shelter with Guru Angad Dev after his last pilgrimage. But he had developed such a soft corner for Jetha that whenever he used to come to Baserkey he would meet him and Jetha began to feel the warmth of father's love, in the love of (Guru) Amardass.

When in 1546 (Guru) Amardass established the town of Goindwal according to the wish of Guru Angad he brought with him quite a number of his relatives to the town of Goindwal to settle there. In that migration maternal grand mother of (Guru) Ramdass also shifted there. At that time Jetha was about twelve years old. As Goindwal is not far from Khadoor Sahib, the town of the 2nd Guru, Jetha got a chance of playing visit to congregation. The company of holy parsons began to leave a deep efect upon the child. Now after selling grams he used to go to the congregational meeting and enjoy the holy music and the atmosphere. It is very well said that, "Childhood shows the man as the morning shows the day". Guru Angad Dev Ji left for his heavenly abode in 1552. Now Guru Amardass came permanently to Goindwal as the third Sikh Guru to spread the gospe of Guru Nanak. Guru Ram Dass was now a blooming young man of 18. In Goindwal he would sell the boiled grams the day long and in the evening he would go to listen to the holy discourses of Guru Nanak.

Guru Amardess knew Jetha Ji for the last thirteen years. He had judged him in all respects and he ha pa deep regard

for the intrinsic quality of (Guru) Ramdass that is why he decided to marry to him his younger daughter Bibi Bhani. There are some unreliable stories about the marriage of (Guru) Ramdass. One such story says that Guru Amar Dass Ji wife over showed some authority about the marriageof her daughter Bibi Bhani and asked a Brahmin to find a suitable match for her. Guru Amar Dass inquired of her as to what kind of young-man should be. Guru's wife pointed to (Guru) Ram Dass who was selling boiled grams in the street that the boy should be like him. Guru Amar Dass is said to have declared that there could be no other likeness and he decided to marry his daughter to him. In fact he knew Jetha Ji for the last thirteen years and he appreciated his qualities that is why he decided to give his daughter in marriage to him.

(Guru) Ramdass had gained much confidence of Guru Amardass that when Akbar called for an explanation from the Guru because some Hindu officers had complained against him that he was breaking all the tenents of Hindu religion. Akbar was at that time in Lahore. Therefore Guru Amardass sent (Guru) Ramdass to present the case of the Guru. It was in the year 1557. In fact the Hindu officials had turned against Guru Amardass because he had started a community kitchen at Goindwal where all took their meals sitting in a row without discrimation of caste, creed, colour, religion, sex and sect. The Hindu considered it a sacrilege.

(Guru) Ramdass presented the case to Akbar in such a beautiful, clear and comprehensive manner that Akbar was satisf ed and he even paid a visit himself. He was so deeply influenced that he gave to the house of Guru 84 villages as his offerings. Guru Ramdass even suggested to Akbar to remove Jazia on the Hindu pilgrimages. He also told him that the custom of Satti was a stigma in Hindu religion which should be removed.

In the year 1558 when Guru Amardass started a tour of

all the Hindu pilgrimages to tell Hindus that taking a dip in Water was not the only pilgrimage but on the other hand it was the rememberance of the name of God that really mattered (Guru) Ram Dass accompnied him in this tour. Whan people misunderstood Guru Amar Dass, he explained the reason of Guru Amar Dass pilgrimage in his beautiful verse, When Guru Amar Dass had returned from Kurkshetar and other pilgrimages, the ascetic and the Goinda Khatri started their movements against the Guru, they would break the pictures of the Sikhs and would give them all sorts of discomforts. The matter had come to such a pass that there could have been some un-towered incidents in order to remove this trouble, Guru Amar Dass started digging his own well and the Sikhs now came from far and near to work for the completion of this well. (Guru) Ram Dass also started work at the Bauli with heart and souls and was so deeply drawn into the service that he forgot himself. It so happened that some relatives of Jetha Ji wha were his caste brothers happened to pass through Goindwal on their way to Haridwar. They decided to have rest at that place. So many people were busy in building the well and Jetha Ji was one of them. When those vain persons found (Guru) Ramdass working in that way, they were cut to the quick. They spoke harsh with Jetha Ji for his low work that he was doing with his parents in law. They went to see Guru Amardass and talked with him harshly. (Guru) Ramdass requested the Guru to forgive his relatives because they were ignorant. (Guru) Ramdass had complete control on his emotions. He was very mild in his disposition. He used to do all jobs gladiy and did not consider service of the people as low or undignified.

(Guru) Ramdass was blessed with three sons. The eldest being Prithi Chand and the youngest (Guru) Arjan Dev. (Guru) Ramdass was sent to Amritsar, at that time a jungle in the year 1573, to establish a town. It is here that (Guru) Ramdass at first got a tank dug and named as Santokh-Sar. The land

that he had bought, was named as Guru Ka Chak. During this period two other incidents happened. The first that the mantle of Guruship was going to fall on Guru Ramdass. Once in order to try patience of his two son-in-laws, Guru Amardass asked them to build platforms, on completion, every time, the Guru did not approve of the platforms and got them demolished. Ramaji the elder son-in-law was irritated and refused working on that platform whereas (Guru) Ramdass pleaded with folded hands that he was not so wise and the Guru was so kind that he every time forgave his shortcomings.

The second was that, once in the morning, as Guru Amar Dass was taking bath and Bibi Bhani, wife of (Guru) Ramdass was serving him, she saw that one foot of the Wooden Choki, was giving way. She promptly put her hand to avoid the fall of the Guru. One of the nails had hurt her hand and the blood was oozing. when Guru Amardass noticed it, he asked her to ask a boon that he could grant her. She requestd him to allow the Gur-Gaddi to remain in the family. Guru Amardass was not happy in granting this boon but he agreed and told her that as she had shed her blood, so shall her grand children shed their blood for the cause of the Gaddi. Hence in the year 1574 Guru Amardass gave Guru Gaddi to Guru Ramdass. It was a great event of History and victory of a humble lover of God and humanity over adversity. Guru Ramdass was so overwhelmed with the kindness of Guru Amardass that he has written in his verses the condition of his mind at that time. He says, "O my true teacher ! What my position was either you know or God knows. I was the lowliest of the lowly and no one would care to look after my welfare. O my great teacher ! it is you who has put me on this high pedestal.

Now Guru Ramdass permanently came to Guru Ka Chak and started his work there. It was here that Rajni came with her husband and he was cured of his cripples. At the spot

he was cured, Guru Ramdass got the tank excavated and named it in the beginning as Amar-Sarowar in commemoration of Guru Amardass which was later known as Amrit Sarowar.

In the year 1579 he met Baba Siri Chand, son of Guru Nanak. Baba Siri Chand was amused with the long beard of Guru Ramdass and asked him, "Why do you keep such a long beard?" Guru Ramdass was so humble that he started cleaning feet of Baba Siri Chand with his beard and said. "Sir, it is just to clean feet of great man, like you". Baba Siri Chand was deeply touched and said. "You have great humility in you. Perhaps because of this very humility you have taken away the seat of Guru Nanak from us. But I am sure it is safe in your hands". He blessed Guru Ramdass and went away.

Guru Ram Dass did not enjoy a very long period of Guruship. He therefore appointed his youngest son (Guru) Arjan Dev as his successor and retired to Goindwal once more and there he went to eternal sleep on 1st September, 1581. Guru Ramdass is called and known as a great Yogi who was not only a yogi but he also ruled over the hearts of the people like a king. Hence he is called Raj Yogi.

Temples in Amritsar District

We shall now describe to you all the Sikh Historical Temples in the Distt. of Amritsar. To start with we shall take Temples of the city proper.

(1) Thara Sahib :

To start with on the left hand side of Akal Takhat is the temple known as 'Thara Sahib'. It is the place where Guru Teg Bahadur after being proclaimed the real Guru came to Amritsar to offer his regards and prayers, at Sri Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple). At that time the temple was being looked after by Priests, They were afraid that Guru Teg Bahadur, who belonged to the family of the builder of the Golden Temple, Guru Arjan Dev Ji, might claim the possession of the temple. Guru Teg Bahadur sent them a message with the assurance that he had no intention of taking possession of the temple, "People of Amritsar are poisoned with jealousy". Saying so he moved towards 'Walla'. The place where he sat and waired under a tree is now popularly known as 'Thara Sahib'.

(2) Manji Sahib

Manji Sahib is situated on the side of Guru Ram Dass Niwas near Langar or Community Kitchen. These days it is known as a congregational place. A very big hall known as GuruNanak Hall has been built under the supervision and Sewa of Sant Bishan Singh. It is an impressive gathering place. At this place Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji used to sit and have Satsang with his followers, during the time when the tank was being

made pakka and the temple was under construction. This place has also seen action and blood durnig the invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali.

(3) Baba Attal and Kaulsar :

Baba Attal was son of Guru Hargobind. This boy was called Baba because, even though young he was extremely wise and old-men like. At the age of nine once he brought one of his friend, back to life after his death. When Guru Hargobind came to know of it, he disapproved the act and told him that life and death should be in the hands ofGod only. The boy was very sensitive. He said "I have taken back one life from God I shall give back one". Saying so he lay down and gave up his own life, Afterwards Guru Hargobind raised this tower in his memory and said. "(1) there shall be no higher building than this in Amritsar town. (2) Anyone who shall come here, his wishes shall be fulfilled. (3) No one shall go hungry from here". Till today these things are true about this place. Besides the tower there is a tank known as Kaulsar. there are two stories about it. The first story says that there used to be pond here full of lotus flowers or 'KAULS' and Goru Hargobind Ji got a tank excavated here and named it etimologically 'Kaulsar' after lotus flower.

The second story says that during Guru's time the daughter of the Qauzi of Lahore named Kaulan took fancy to Guru Hargobind and became his devotee. She hence was teased and troubled by her kinsmen. When Guru Hargobind heard this he took pity upon her and brought her to Amritsar which resulted in his first two battels with the imperial Army. Kaulan wanted to immortalize her name. She requested the Guru to this effect Guru Hargobind then got a tank excavated here and to prepetuate her memory named it 'KAUL-SAR' after her name, He also blessed her that visit of a visitor would be incomplete if one did not take a dip in 'Kaulsar' as well. Hence this place is attracting visitors regularly.

(4) Bapbk-Sar :

When we move from Baba Attal towards Chattiwind, on the way on left hand side is the temple known as Babek-Sar. This temple reminds us of Guru Hargobind Ji the 6th Sikh Guru. Normally he used to sit here and have spritiual discourse with learned men. 'BABEK' means discussion. It is also said that when Bibi Kaulan was a bit anxious for the Guru he gave her spiritual blessings or 'Babek' here. It is also here that the Guru used to give training to the Sikhs who flocked around him in Military art. There is a beautiful tank attached to this temple as well.

(5) Ram Sar

'Ram-Sar' is situated just opposite Babek Sar. In olden times this place was a beautiful mango grove. Here Guru Arjan Dev Ji the 5th Sikh Guru used to sit and meditate. It is also here that he dictate Guru Granth Sahib to Bhai Gurdas. There is a platform here where it is said that Guru Arjan Dev Ji used to sit and it is there that he composed the famous psalm of peace or 'Sukhmani'. A small tank is also attached to this place.

(6) Shahid-Ganj Bada Dip Singh

It is a place near Ram-Sar. It is here that Baba Dip Singh is said to have breathed his last. This place used to be a cremation ground in the past. In the memory of Baba Dip Singh, now there stands a temple. Many people come here with deep faith add reverence. In 1758 Ahmad Shah Abdali desecrated the Golden Temple. When Baba Dip Singh heard the news, he could not telerate it. He took a vow to avenge himself upon the forces of Ahmad Shah Abdali. At the age of 79 this brave old man took with him a few Sikhs, came to Tarn Taran, offered his prayers and took a vow that he shall die only in the premises of the temple. Five miles away from

Amritsar, he met forces of Abdali. In the ensuing battle he was mortally wounded. He still kept on fighting, supporting his head with left hand, and fighting with the right hand. Finally he died in the premises of the temple. It was here that his body was cremated. This temple therefore reminds us of the saga of devotion and bravery.

(7) Santokh-Sar (Tahli Sahib)

This is the oldest Gurdwara of Amritsar. When (Guru) 'Ram-Dass' came here as Jetha Ji he was seeking a place on the advise of Guru Amar Dass for excavation of Amrit Sarovar. It so happened that while he was getting the place being dug. he discovered an old yogi sitting in meditation. After some time the yogi opened his eyes and told (Guru) Ram-Das that he had been in that state for a number of years, waiting for (Guru) Ram-Das to give him salvation. On saying so he gave out his name as Santokha and left for heavenly adode. (Guru) Ram-Dass therefore named the tank after the sage as "santokh-sar", He also built a congregational place. During the completion of these places' he used to sit under a ' Tahli' tree, That is why the temple is known as "Tahli-sahib".

(8) Sara-Garhi

This temple is a memorial built by the Britishers in recognition of the bravery of the Sikhs, It is said that some twenty one Sikh men and non-commissioned officers headed dy Hawaldar Ishar Singh, were in the fort of Sara-Garhi. On the 12th September 1897 an attack came form the Pathan side with ten thousand men. This 21 men kept their post and died to the last man. This showed unflinching courage of Sikh Soldiers. A tablet to this effect is put on the gate of this temple which reads as follows : "The Government of India has caused this memorial to be erected the memory of 21 non-commissioned officers and men of the 36th Sikhs who laid downtheir lives etc. etc.

(9) Guru ke Mehal

Guru Ke Mehal is situated in Guru Bazar. It is in a small street. The building in fact was a residential place of Guru Ramdass and later Guru Arjan Dev Ji. Of course Guru Ramdass lived for a short while but Guru Arjan Dev Ji lived here for a long time. Hence it is known as a palace of the Guru. It is birth place of Guru Teg Bahadu the IX Guru.

(10) Toba Bhai Salo

Bhai Sale was a reknowned devotee of Guru Ram Dass. Guru Ram Dass had awarded to him the charge of the Kotwali of Amritsar. Now-a-days it is known as Salo's Dharamsala or Toba Bhai Salo. He was a well known poet and a scholar. His works are well recognised and scholars pay a great regard to his descriptions.

(11) Loh-Garh

This place is in commemoration of the fort that Guru Har Gobind Ji had established to the face the Mughal forces during the time of Shah-Jahan, It is at that time that he used a cannon of wood to fight with the Mughals. He gave a crushing defeat to the imperial forces. Today there stands a temple at the sight,

(12) Pipli Sahib :

This temple is situated on G.T. Road from Amritear to Lahore, 2 miles away from Amritsar. It is believed that the 5th Guru while going to Lahore had syayed af this place. 6th Guru also often come to this place and took rest.

(13) Dam-Dama-Sahib

This temple is on the G. T. Road, near the village Wadali Guru Hargobind used to come here for haunting. Once, after

killing a wild pig with a sword he came to take rest here for a while.

(14) Kotha-Sahib-Walla :

This village is 3 miles away from Amritsar towards East. Within Guru Teg Bahadur the 9th Guru having been disappointed by the people of Amritsar, was going away the ladies of Amritsar, in order to beg pardon of him, followed the Guru and overtook him here. They brought with them meals and requested him tp forgive the ignorant people of Amritsar and requested him to pay a visit to Amritsar. The Guru blessed these women that they would always be full of service and name of God and accepted their presents and moved on.

(15) Baba Bakala :

Baba Bakala is one of the most famous temple near river Beas. It is here that 9th Guru Tegh Bahadur was discovered and declared the 9th Guru. History moves in this way that the 8th Guru, Shri Guru Harkrishan, before he left for his heavenly abode, gave to a Sikh a coconut and 5 paisa's, He told him that the Baba or the9th Guru was at Bakala.But he did not mention the name. No it so happened that 22 relatives of the Guru took seats as imposters, posing themselves as the real Guru. It was very difficult for the Sikhs to know who was the real Guru. During this period a Sikh merchant named Makhan Shah Lubana came from his long travels. He had wished once when his ship was sinking in the high seas that he would offer 500 gold coins to the Guru if his ship was saved. The Guru and the God had been kind to him and he came at first chance to fulfil his promise.

He was baffled to find 22 persons claiming themselves as the Guru. Therefore he hit upon a plan that he would offer five coins to each Guru and let the Guru himself ask his own

sum. He tried 22 persons but no one claimed more than what he gave. He was told that there was a man meditating in a hut belonging to the same family who had never proclaimed himself as the Guru. Makhan Shah went to Guru Teg Bahadur and offered five coins as usual but the Guru interepted him by saying that he was not a true Sikh who had promised 500 gold Mohar and was only giving five. Makhan Shah was so elated that he climbed the top of the roof of the house and gave a call, "Guru Ladho Re" or "I have found the Guru". The room where the Guru was meditating is known as Bhora Sahib. In Baba Bakala there is another memorial standing in momory of MataGanga (wife of Guru Arjan Dev Ji) who happened to pass last hours of her life here.

(16) Khadur Sahib :

Khadur Sahib is the place where lived 2nd Guru, Guru Angad Dev Ji. In this small township which is some 40 K.M. from Amritsar. There are many Gurdwaras having connection with the Guru, the first in Tapna Sahib or Tap-Asthan of Guru Nanak and Guru Angad Dev Ji. It is said that here Guru Nanak remained in meditation for a number of years. Right opposite the place of meditation of Guru Nanak, there is the place of meditation of Guru Angad Dev Ji--in middle there is a tank on the left hand side of the Tap-Asthan of Guru Nanak. There is Smadh of Bala, a companion of Guru Nanak's Travels.

(ii) Gurdwara Mai Warai or Bhari : Guru Angad was a relative of Mai Warai, he with his father was employed by a headman of a village. It is said that one day, there was some difference in accounts, The headman was angry. Bhai Lehna came to Khadur to get recommendation of Mai Warai. She introduced him to Guru Nanak and this meeting kindled fire in him. At the time Guru Nanak was living in her house.

Once Mai Warai was going to fields carrying with her breakfast for the farm-workers, Bhai Mardana was sitting with Guru Nanak and he wanted food. Mai Warai overheard him and offered with love breakfast to them. It is also said that in the same house, Guru Nanak had met Bhai Lehna and remarkd that Bhai Lehna was to get and he was to give. The Gurdwara here is under construction these days.

(iii) GURDWARA MAL AKHARA : It is here that after being declared as the 2nd Guru Guru Angad Dev came here and addressed congregations.

It is also hear in this place that Guru Angad Dev Ji reformed Gurmukhi Script gave it proper Grammer and also introduced signs. That is why, Punjabi Language Script is called Gurumukhi it means that it came from the mouth of the Guru.

There is another story that when Hammayun had been defeated in the battle-field and he was on the run, he came to the presence of Guru Angad Dev Ji. The Guru was busy, Hammayun felt insulted and out of anger drew out his sword. The Guru smiled to see his act and told him that when there was need to use it, he could not use it and now on an unarmed Saint, he had the courage to draw it.On hearing this Hamanyun felt ashamed and beg pardon of the Guru. In this Gurdwara Guru Angad Dev Ji for the first time organised games and wrestling matches, that is why it is known as Mal Akhara.

(iv) GURDWARA THARA SAHIB : It is here that from time to time, Guru Angad Dev Ji would come sit and meditate.

(v) GURDWARA KHADI SAHIB : It is said that Guru Amar Dass was a devotee of Guru Angad Dev Ji. He used to bring water from river Beas, some 6 miles away from Khadur. One

day it was raining and Guru Amar Dass lost touch with time. At midnight he was coming with pitcher of water over his head and stumbled against loom of a weaver. The weaver asked his wife, who could be there at that hour af the night. She out of anger remarked that who else could be there than Amroo, who has no place. Guru Amar Dass at the time said, "Oh mad woman, I have a place." It is said that next morning the lady had become mad. It is also here Guru Angad Dev Ji was cremated.

On the road of Goindwal, some 4 Km. away there is a Gurdwara known as Damdama Sahib, where Guru Amar Dass used to take rest while bringing water from Beas. It is said once his foot touched a bone and there appeared a Sanyasi who had not been able to get salvation. At the sight of Guru Amar Dass he received salvation.

(17) Goindwal Sahib :

Goindwal is about 5 Km. away from Khadur Sahib and 24 Km. away from Tarn Taran. The village belonged to a Khatri named Goinda. The village was said to be effected by some evil spirits and Guru Amar Dass removed the evil effects and the village again became a popular place. When Guru Amar Dass sat on the Gurgadi he made this place his permanent abode. There is Bawli Sahib, a well got dug dy the Guru with 84 steps. It is said that if someone with faith recites Japji Sahib on each step and takes a dip also, his cycle of births would come to a stop. Besides this there is house of Guru Amar Dass and each room there is connecten with a story from the life of the Guru. There is a bath room where Bibi Bhani had shown devotion and service to the Guru. There is also a peg which Guru Amar Dass used to hold while meditating and the room where the fever "Taia" was imprisioned by the Guru. There is arrangement for stay in this Temple and it is visited by devotees often.

(18) Tarn Taran :

This Temple also reminds us of Guru Arjan Dev Ji. while Guru Arjan Dev was not feeling comfortable at Amritsar, because his eldar brother Pirthi Chand, was a constant source of trouble to him, he shifted to Tarn Taran. There he built a Temple also resembling in design to the Golden Temple. The tank of this temple is much bigger than that of Golden Temple. It is also quite important and beautiful in design and reminds us of Guru Arjan who was a great builder.

(19) Samadh Bada Nodh Singh : Baba Deep Singh :

This place is a memorial 8 Km. away from Amritsar on Tarn Taran Road. In the year 1758, Golden Temple was descrated by Abdali. When this news reched Baba Deep Singh, even at the age of 79, he could not contain himself and with devoted Sikhs he started towards Amritsar. He and his forces met forces of Abdaii and there was a dreadful battle and Baba Nodh Singh died bravely, while Baba Deep Singh was mortally wounded. The Smadh of Baba Nodh Singh is on the roadside and all trafic stops in reverence. A few yards away is the place where Baba Deep Singh was wounded.

(20) Sangrana Sahib :

This temple is in the memory of Guru Hargobind. It is here that he met Mai Sulakhni. This place is on the way to Tarn Taran near village Chabba. When Guru Hargobind was passing that way she came and prayed to him for a son. The Guru instead of one, granted her seven sons. Quite a number of devotees go there to seek a son from the God Almighty.

(21) Chola Sahib :

This village has a temple in memory of Guru Arjan. Once

Guru Arjan Dev Ji came to the village Bhani. The Namderdar was respectful and his wife presented the Guru with a dress or Chola. The Guru gave the boon that as the dress covers the body so shall their deeds be covered by the name of God. The village was later called as chola and is still known by the same name.

(22) Gurdwara Bibi Rajni :

The Temple is situated in the house of Duni Chand Mafidar of Patti. It is said that his 7th daughter Rajni had struck to the name of God. Her father in wrath got her married to a cripple, That cripple was cured with a dip in Amritsar over at Dukh Bhanjni Ber, and the couple lived a devoted life in Amritsar in the service of Guru Ramdass. The temple is situated in village Patti.

(23) Chabbal :

This village is about 9 Km. away from Amritsar towards Khemkaran. The chronicles say that some devotees of the Guru Hargobind the 6th Guru had come to see him. He sent a message home that some sweets may be sent to entertain them The Sweets had been made for the marriage of his daughter Bibi Vero. Guru's wife suggested that these sweets should not be used. The Guru said, if Sikhs can not eat, these, would be enjoyed by the Mughuls. *It* so happened that the Governor of Lahore soon invaded Amritsar.The Guru had to shift to chabbal And the marriage was performed there. True to the words of Guru the sweets were looted and enjoyed by the Mughuls.

(24) Chheharta Sahib :

The Sikh Chronicles tell us that Mata Ganga Ji wife of Guru Arjan Dev wanted a son, She asked the Guru for this boon. He suggested that she should go to Baba Budha Ji at

Beer Sahib and ask for this boon. One day she cooked food with her own hands and with servants proceeded in carts. When Baba Budha Ji saw the calvacade coming he said by the way, "what has happened to the house of the Guru that they are on the run", He was not happy with all the show. Mata Ganga came back disappointed. Guru Arjan Dev told her that she should have gone in a simple manner and also said that the words of Baba Budha Ji must be honoured. So he left Amritsar and went to live at village Wadali. From wadali he used to come to this place which is now known as chheharta and sit here in meditation. After some time he got a well dug and put a "harat" to draw water. Originally arrangements were made for six bullocks to draw water, but there was no space for the sixth bull the workers came to the Guru aud asked as to what could be done. Guru Arjan said,"work the well with five bullocks, the Sixth Guru himself will make the sixth "Harat" run Now when the Sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind passed by this way the Sikhs asked him to run it, He said that the Sikhs, "Harat" shall move and lo, it was moving without a bullock. It is with this reference that the temple is known as 'Chheharta', Many people devotedly go there on Panchmi and take a dip. It is also said that those children who die prematurely if taken there are restored to a long life.

[25] Guru Ki Wadali :

This village is about 7 miles away from Amritsar. To prove true words of Baba Budha Ji Guru Arjan Dev Ji had come to live here from Amritsar. Also Prithi Chand had brought Sulhi Khan a Pathan to tease the Guru. He lived here for about nine months and the 6th (Guru) Hargobind was born in this village.

(26) San Sahib--Basarke :

Basarke village is the ancestral village of (Guru) Amar

Dass. Before he went to serve Guru Angad he was living here, After Guru Amar Dass was declared Guru he went to Goindwal But one day Datu Ji son of Guru Angad came and kicked Guru Amar Dass saying that he had usurped his rightful place by becoming the Guru. Guru Amar Dass was full of gentility and pressed his foot saying that it might have been hurt. He later left Goindwal and went into hiding, In fact he had gone to his village Basarke and locked himself in a room and wrote on the door that anyone who shall open the door shall go to hell.

Now the Sikh Sangats were uneasy and wanted the Guru to come. They went to BabaBudha Ji and asked him to find out the Guru. Baba Budha Ji let loose the horse.The horse searched the Guru and lo, it stood before the room. Baba Budha Ji read the words and he hit upon a plan. He broke into the room and raquested the Guru to grace the sangat with his Darshans, The Guru asked him, "How do you come into this room". Baba Ji replied, "Sir, I have not broken your order, I have simply broken into the room". The Guru said, "Be it as God wishes. This place, shall be known as 'San Sahib' and any one who passed through this shall be free from the cycle of births". Now-a-days people go there and reverently pass through the "San" the Temple stands on the road to Beer Sahib from Chheharta.

[27] Beer Baba Budha Ji :

It is the place where Baba Budha Ji spent his old age during the time of Guru Arjan Dev Ji before he has appointed as the head priest of Golden Temple. It is also hear that he had blessed Mata Ganga that she shall get a son, who shall be as brave as to crush his enemies, as he had crushed an onion.

Baba Budha was born at Kathu Nangal a village in Amritsar Distt. His father's name was Bhai Sugha Randhawa

and mother's name was Mata Gora. He was born in the year 1506 A.D. He spent his childhood while grazing cattle. One day, he met Guru Nanak and was touched by his fairy personality. Guru Nanak finding that the child carried an old head on young shoulders, gave him the Surname of Baba Budha. In fact, he can be called one of the first Sikhs of Guru Nanak. He was given duty of giving anointment to all the Sikh Gurus to come till the sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji.

When Akbar gave a Jagir to Bibi Bhani, daughter of Guru Amar Dass, Baba Budha was asked to look after the Jagir. Baba Ji decided to live in a forest, so that he could meditate and remember God. A forest is called Beer in Punjabi. It is here that he blessed Mata Ganga Ji. When Golden Temple was under construction, he sat under a Bar tree (Jujubee) and used to grind lime for the construction of the temple. He was made the first Granthi or head priest of the temple. He lived long. He died at Ramdass in the year 1631 A. D. during the times of Guru Hargobind Ji, Guru Hargobind Sahib himself set fire to his funeral pyre.

(28) Guru Sar Satlani :

This village is on the way to Lahore. When Guru Har Gobind had started his march from Bharana he came to rest here. Stayed here for some days and gave a new message of love and self-defence to his people.

(29) Guru Ka Bagh :

While Guru Arjan Dev was going to Lahere for being prosecuted He passed by this way. It was completely a barran land and there was no vegetation here. The temple here is called "Roor Sahib" meaning barran land, but with the blessings of the feet of the Guru the place became fertile and later there was a garden here. Guru Ka Bagh also represents, Sikhs

spirit for freedom. As it was from here that the Sikhs showed that while they can carry arms, they can still be non-voilent. The British had to relent and the Morcha of Guru Ka Bagh was successful in 1922 and in 1924 Gurudwara act was passed and S. G. P. C. came into being. It reminds one of the great heroic deeds of brave sons of Guru Gobind Singh.

(30) Shaheed Ganj Bhai Taru Singh V. Poohla :

Who does not know the great sacrifice of Bhai Taru Singh. We repeat it every day in our prayer that we are grateful to those who got their scalp cut off with knife but did not give up their faith. This is the story of Bhai Taru Singh who lived in village Poohla in Amritsar Distt. Nawab Zakuria Khan Suba of Lahore ordered that Bhai Taru Singh should get his hair cut. But Bhai Taru Singh resisted the effort to the extent that his scalp was cut off. As God willed Zakuria Khan developed urine trouble. Now he was told that as long he did not get beating with the shoe of Bhai Taru Singh on his head his trouble would continue. It proved true and in 22 days he died with shoe beatings and later Bhai Taru Singh breathed his last. The temple stands there in the memory of his sacrifice and is memorial to faith of all the Sikhs.

(31) Gurdwara Birth Place Baba Deep Singh Village Puhla

At this place was born Baba Deep Singh the great Sikh warrior who sacrificed his life for the honour of Sikh religion and Harmandir. He was born on 26 January 1682 in the honse of Bhai Bhagta. He spent his childhood in freedom and getting education. He received baptism of the hands of Guru Gobind Singh on the Baisakhi day of 1699 at the age of 17.

Guru Gobind Singh ordered him to learn and write Gurbani. He wrote 4 Copies of Sri Guru Granth Sahib in hand. One of the Copies is lying at Golden Temple bound in 2 kg. of gold. He gave a crushing defeat to Abdali and his men. He

fulfilled his promise and routed the enemy. He proved true the words of the Guru. "If you have a desire to play game of Love, then come with your head in your hand. Once you put forward your foot into this street, there is to be no retreat.

(32) Nanaksar Verka

This Gurdwara is situated on road to Gurdaspur. It is said that during his travels Guru Nanak Dev happened to pass through the village Verka while he was resting under a tree, a lady come to him with her two withered sons who were thin without blood. She prayed to the Guru to have mercy of them. Guru Nanak asked her to bathe her sons in the water of a nearby pond, and be the childran become healthy in a few days.

People from all over India come to this Gurdwara. In place of pond there is a tank, where withered children ere bathed. Even now God shows his mercy. The place is called Nanaksar Verka.

